DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 765.84/4659 FOR Telegram #213, 5 pm.

FROM Italy (Kirk) DATED June 16, 1936.
TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING: Straits Conference to be held in Montreux on June 22nd. Italy does not intend to send observers. Gives reasons this decision.

wth

767.68119/920

MED
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (b)

ROME

Dated June 16, 1936

Received 2:40 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington

213, June 16, 5 p.m.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Foreign Office officials state that in accordance with the policy of suspending cooperation with the League while sanctions are being applied, Italy does not intend to send representatives to attend either the meeting of the League Council or the Assembly scheduled to take place on June 26th and 30th respectively. It is rumored, however, that Mussolini may address some statement to the League explaining his position either before or during those meetings.

As regards the Straits conference to be held in Montreux on June 22nd the officials say that although the Italian Government has signified a willingness to participate in the examination of the question of the Straits convention of 1923 and as stated in my 196, June 6, 9 a.m., had proposed to attend a conference convoked for that purpose, it had now been decided not to be represented at the meeting at Montreux and it was not the present intention to send observers.

767.68119

observers. The explanation was given that if the Council had met on June 16th as originally planned and if some action had been taken which would have clarified the atmosphere prior to June 22nd Italy might have considered favorably the advisability of attending the Montreux conference. Now, however, that the Council meeting had been postponed and in view of the maintenance of sanctions and the situation resulting from the naval combination against Italy in the Mediterranean the Italians would not take part in the conference of June 22nd and consequently it was not believed that any progress would be made at that meeting towards a settlement of the questions involved.

In general Foreign Office officials maintain that Mussolini has clearly indicated a conciliatory attitude in his recent utterances especially to the DAILY TELEGRAPH, that Grandi has confirmed these statements in his conferences at the British Foreign Office but that up to the present there has been no response from the other side even in the form of a request for a more precise statement of the Italian position. The officials gave no indication that any diplomatic move by the Italian Government was to be expected for the moment and expressed the opinion that Italy must await developments or some indication of policy on the part of the governments opposed to her.

KIRK

CSB

ADDRESS REPLY TO
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
AND REFER TO INITIALS
AND No.
(SC)EF70

Telegram To Istanbul 6/20/36 PHA/LS

JUN 22 1936

5
RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
June 19 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

1936 JUN 19 AM 11 02

To Istanbul 6/26/36 RAH/LS

Confidential

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Sir:

The Navy Department has given careful consideration to your letter NE 767.68119/912 of June 2, 1936, transmitting a copy of a communication received from the Ambassador at Istanbul on the subject of the Turkish proposal for revision of the régime of the Dardanelles Straits.

It appears that the present status of the negotiations dealing with the above subject and their probable outcome as summarized by the Ambassador present no factors which would lead to alteration in the views of the Navy Department on this subject as expressed in its confidential letters of August 17, 1935, and May 23, 1936, both under the file number (SC) EF70. Those views are therefore adhered to.

The Navy Department notes with concurrence the views expressed by the Ambassador regarding the inadvisability of American participation in any conference which may be held for the reconsideration of the Straits Convention.

Respectfully,

M. H. Standley

Acting Secretary of the Navy.

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

767.68119/921

FILED
FEB 27 1941

Reg #147777

June 30 1936

No. 47

To the American Ambassador,

Istanbul.

The Secretary of State refers to the Department's telegram No. 30 of June 22, 5 p.m., regarding the proposed revision of the Straits régime, and transmits for the information of the Ambassador copies of certain correspondence exchanged in this connection with the Navy Department.

Enclosures:

From Navy Department,
May 23, 1936;

To Navy Department,
June 2, 1936;

From Navy Department,
June 18, 1936.

767.68119/921

NE RAH/LS

A true copy of the signed original.

JUN 26 1936

767.68119/921

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 23 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

LMS
A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

FROM
Rome

Dated June 22, 1936

Rec'd 4:35 p. m.

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
Paraphrased
JUN 23 1936
6/29 U.C.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,

Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-G/C
JUL 8 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

227, June 22, 7 p. m.

(GRAY) In an article describing the importance of the Straits question the GIORNALE D'ITALIA tonight asserts that Italy will not consider as binding any agreement reached at Montreux without her approval. The newspaper also says that the danger of war in the Mediterranean adduced by Turkey as a reason for remilitarization is in reality entirely unfounded and points out that while Russia, Bulgaria and Rumania should logically be opposed to the Turkish demands, all powers having interests in the Black Sea, among them Italy with her heavy sea trade, should be likewise interested in keeping the Straits open.

FILED
JUL 2 1936

The TRIBUNA states editorially that there is no justification for continuing the Mediterranean mutual assistance agreements after sanctions are lifted since these were allegedly a precautionary measure against possible Italian retaliation to sanctions; Italy not having responded to past provocation she would scarcely

do

767.68119/922

do so now. In addition it remarks that a continuation of the accords would create an atmosphere of suspicion and even provocation unpropitious to European collaboration. This newspaper also interprets the attitude of certain inspired French newspapers as indicating an intention on the part of the Popular Front Government to use its consent to a continuation of the Mediterranean accords as a means of obtaining British guarantees against Germany and at the same time of offending Fascist Italy. Thus the French idea would be to discard Germany and Italy and entrust European destinies to England, France, Russia and the Little Entente. The writer, however, believes England is unwilling to alienate Germany with whom she desires an air pact and is concerned at Soviet action in France and that the plans of the Popular Front will fail miserably in everything but the creation of further agitation in Europe. (END GRAY).

A rumor of which there is no corroboration has recently reached the Embassy to the effect that conversations are proceeding or are about to be instituted between England and Italy with a view to reaching an agreement between the two countries on the Mediterranean problem and that the project for an accord comprises

the

the following items: (one) agreement as regards number and type of British vessels to be stationed in the Mediterranean; (two) agreement as to the strength of Italy's air force in the Mediterranean; (three) agreement whereby Italy will maintain 75,000 troops in Libya and England will maintain the same number in Egypt and the Sudan; (four) agreement regarding British fortification of Cyprus, Haifa and Alexandria.

KIRK

SMS:EMB

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

68353

Istanbul, Turkey, June 6, 1936.

No. 46

SUBJECT: The meeting of the Technical Maritime Committee of the Economic Council of the Balkan Entente.

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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1936 JUN 22 PM 4 18
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK Yes No
To the Field
In U. S. A.
Copy to Commerce (Confidential)
" " Navy (")
JUL 17 1936

767.68119/923

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 23 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
RECORDING DESK
FILE - WNB
JUL 16 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

767.68119/908

Sir:

With reference to my despatch No. 22 of April 23, 1936, and particularly to the third paragraph (beginning on page two) in which were discussed the objections of American shipping interests to the high charges levied by the Turkish Government upon vessels passing through the Straits, even those which do not call at a Turkish port, I have the honor to report that this matter has already become a subject of discussion among the interested nations.

740.0011 Mutual guarantee/ Balkan

The Technical Maritime Committee of the Economic Council of the Balkan Entente met in Istanbul from May 27 to June 3, 1936. Delegates were present from Rumania, Greece, and Yugoslavia, as well as Turkey.

The

FILED
JUL 21 1936

1/ The delegations, a list of which is enclosed, contained representatives of the respective Ministries for Foreign Affairs, but the principal delegates were technical men. An air of mystery surrounded the first sessions of this conference. According to one reliable source of information, the principal reason for its convocation was to try to work out a plan for organizing a joint commercial steamship line between the Black Sea and the Adriatic, containing eight vessels - two flying each of the four flags, Rumanian, Greek, Yugoslav, and Turkish. When the conference met, however, it was found that the unequal development of the respective merchant fleets and the dissimilarity in the maritime policies of the Balkan countries defeated all attempts at coordination; the Greeks have their flag flying on the high seas with little Government assistance, and the Rumanian ocean-going fleet is very much dependent on the Government, while the Turkish merchant fleet was characterized by one of the non-Turkish delegates as existing mostly on paper in the form of plans for the future. Although the avowed purpose of calling the meeting was not achieved, agreement was reached on a method of determining tonnage of vessels for the purpose of port dues. The two or more systems employed by the various Balkan countries will be coordinated, and, if the Economic Council ratifies the plan, the English system will be adopted.

A member of my staff was informed by one of the non-Turkish delegates to the conference that most of the sessions were devoted to the question of the taxes which the Turkish Government collects from all vessels passing through the Straits. According to Turkish statistics,

the

the Greek and Rumanian vessels form a majority of those which pass through each year. The Greek delegation took the initiative in introducing the subject to the meeting. The Turkish delegation asserted that it had no authority to discuss it. The Greeks, supported by the Rumanians, replied that they did not expect the Turkish Government to commit itself at this time, but only wished to put their point of view on record. With regard to lighthouse dues, the Rumanians pointed out that all of the vessels which pass through the Straits en route to ports such as Odessa sail close to the Rumanian coast and avail themselves of the Rumanian beacons, but that the Rumanian Government does not feel justified in collecting lighthouse fees from them: and the Rumanians stated that they saw no more reason why vessels passing through the Straits without calling at a Turkish port should be required to pay such fees. The Greeks and the Rumanians objected also to the sanitary taxes and to the charge for the maintenance of a life-saving service, which is levied upon each voyage. The principal Turkish delegate informed them that although his Government might wish to lessen some of these payments on behalf of members of the Balkan Entente, he saw no way by which this could be done without granting the same concession to vessels of other nations.

This Embassy's informant stated that the Turks were obviously embarrassed by the discussions and did everything they could to put an end to them. Their efforts, however, were of no avail; and most of the time spent in the meeting was devoted to this question. The interested parties felt that they did excellent spade work in preparation for more profitable discussions at the forthcoming

coming Montreux Conference.

The same member of my staff was told by an Italian who has close associations with his Embassy in Turkey that he has been following these meetings very carefully as Italy is fearful of the establishment of a steamship line between the Black Sea and the Adriatic which would compete with the Italian line. He acknowledged that he was pleased at the failure of the conference to accomplish its purpose, and equally pleased over the discussions of the Straits taxes. He maintained that the Lausanne Treaty is being violated by the Turks in stopping boats passing in transit through the Straits for the collection of sanitary taxes, and considered it certain that Italy would bring up this matter at the Montreux Conference. He remarked that, although the Turks have often been successful in profiting from the differences among the Western European countries, and probably would have similar success at the Montreux Conference with regard to certain matters, yet all of the European countries are agreed in their desire to lower the dues paid by their vessels in passing through the Straits, especially those applicable to vessels which do not call at Turkish ports. In reply to a question whether Italy would certainly be represented at the Conference, he said that this conference differs from the London Naval Conference in that Italy's rights are involved, and that there will be no danger of her delegates not being present and playing a prominent role. He indicated that the principal aim of Italy at the conference would be to preserve the Straits Commission so that the situation

here

here might be watched, and furthermore stated that Italy wishes freedom of passage through the Straits for war-ships.

Respectfully yours,

J. V. A. MacMurray.

√ Enclosure:
1/ - List of Delegates.

3 Carbon Copies
Received RLO
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Copies sent to Embassies in Berlin, London, Moscow, Paris, Rome, Tokyo; Legations in Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia; and Consulate in Geneva.

Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 46 , dated June 6, 1936, from the American Embassy at Istanbul, Turkey.

The Technical Maritime Committee of the Economic Council of the Balkan Entente.

The Rumanian Delegation:

Constantin Mihalopal, Inspector General of Communications
Grigore Vassilescu, Inspector
L. Benzi, Inspector
Georges Maniolou, Istanbul Agent of the Rumanian Shipping Board
Constantinidi, Athens Agent of the Rumanian Shipping Board
Dimitrie Nicolaou, Consul General.

The Turkish Delegation:

Bedii, Delegate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ayet Altug, Director of Communication of the Ministry of Economy
Behcet Kemal, Chief in the same bureau
Nihad, Assistant Chief of Maritime Communications
Şinasi, Permanent Secretary of the Balkanic Council.

The Greek Delegation:

Basile Scarpatis, Captain, Port Captain of Piraeus
Athanase Tchemberopulo, Commander, Greek Navy
Nicholas Commene, Lt. Commander, Greek Navy
Pericles Calimanopoulo, Director of the Haic Shipping Line
Nicolas Hadjivassiliou, Foreign Service Officer.

The Yugoslav Delegation:

Slovko Sirichtchevitch, Chief of Economic and Maritime Bureau
Dr. Stiepo Knejevitch, President of the Yugoslav Shipping Board
Nikodie Yovanovitch, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

LMS

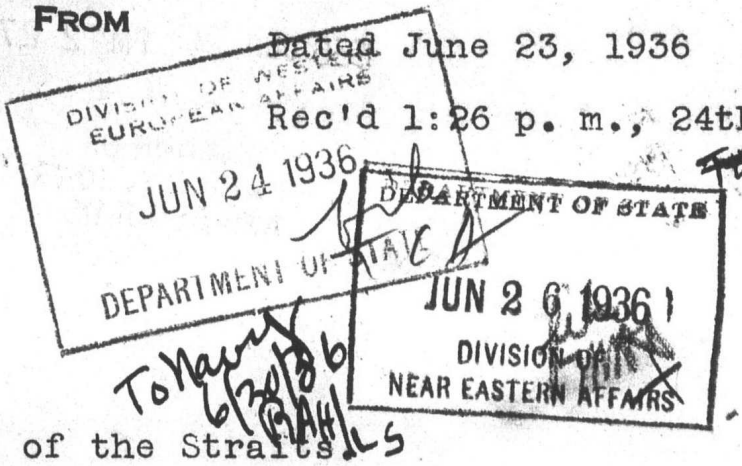
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B) and (A)

FROM

Geneva (part air)

Dated June 23, 1936

Rec'd 1:26 p. m., 24th.



Secretary of State,

Washington.

244, June 23, noon.

Conference on regime of the Straits.

The Polish Minister returning from a private conversation with the Turkish Foreign Minister at Montreux tells me that Aras informed him that Turkey had given direct commercial assurances to the United States and Poland, the inference being that these were the only non-conference powers to which they had been accorded.

The draft convention submitted by Turkey makes no mention of a continuing Straits commission. The Bulgarian and Rumanian delegations here expressed to me strongly the view that Turkish governmental formalities at the Straits could in effect be so obstructive and discriminatory as largely to nullify the principle of free commercial transit and that some neutral body of appeal such as a Straits commission is an essential safeguard.

I am reliably informed by delegates of various participating states that the present situation at Montreux indicates that there will be no opposition to Turkish re-militarization,

767.68119/924

militarization, that the commercial aspects as suggested above are regarded as a problem, but that the real question in the conference will be concerning the passage of war vessels each state represented already taking positions based on individual strategic considerations. In the last respect the real problem of the conference is seen to lie in an adjustment of the British and Russian positions.

GILBERT

KLP

PREPARING OFFICE
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TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

TO BE TRANSMITTED
CONFIDENTIAL CODE
NONCONFIDENTIAL CODE
PARTAIR
PLAIN

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Washington,
June 25, 1936.

6 pm

AMEMBASSY

ISTANBUL (TURKEY)

32

The following statement is made in telegram from Consulate at Geneva dated June 23, noon, reporting on Montreux conference QUOTE The Polish Minister returning from a private conversation with the Turkish Foreign Minister at Montreux tells me that Aras informed him that Turkey had given direct commercial assurances to the United States and Poland, the inference being that these were the only non-conference powers to which they had been accorded UNQUOTE

In speaking of QUOTE direct commercial assurances to the United States UNQUOTE is it your understanding that the Turkish Foreign Minister was referring to his statement to you on April 22 covered in the second paragraph on page four of enclosure No. 1 to your despatch No. 22 of April 23? If so, please indicate whether in your opinion the statement of the Foreign Minister was intended as a specific assurance to this Government or as background information.

1908

767.68119/924

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
1936 JUN 25 PM 5 22
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

NE RAH/GC

767.68119/924

CR
Jun. 25 1936 PM

Enciphered by _____

Sent by operator _____ M., _____, 19____, _____

D. C. R.—No. 50

1—1462 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

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TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

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Washington,

AMEMBASSY

June 22, 1936.

ISTANBUL (TURKEY)

30 After giving full consideration to the questions raised in your despatch No. 22 of April 23, the Navy Department reaffirms its view with respect to the desirability of a bilateral agreement between the United States and Turkey for the purpose of safeguarding American rights in the navigation of the Straits, as expressed in its letter of August 17, 1935, a copy of which was transmitted to the Embassy under cover of the Department's mail instruction No. 219 of September 11, 1935.

This Department and the Navy Department concur in your view regarding the inadvisability of American representation at the Montreux Conference. Accordingly you may in your discretion advise the Turkish authorities informally that this Government has no intention of sending an observer to the conference but that it would appreciate being kept informed of the progress of negotiations.

Please continue to report fully.

NE PHA,RAH&WSM/LS&GO

765.68119/921

Enciphered by .....

Sent by operator ..... *M.*, ..., *19*....., ...

D. C. R.—No. 50 1—1462 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

765.68119/924A

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

1936 JUN 22 PM 4 41

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF
MIL. INTEL. DIV.
JUN 15 1936
WAR DEPARTMENT

6.3 2044-341/2

G-2 Report 5900

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
JUN 23 1936
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

Fli

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
June 16 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

TURKEY (Combat)

Subject: National Defense Policy Pertaining to Army, Navy and Air - General. Note of Turkish Foreign Office on The Straits Regime.

767.68119/925

Following is an English translation of the note from the Turkish Foreign Office on the Straits regime:

In 1923, when Turkey agreed to sign at Lausanne the Straits Convention which established freedom of passage and demilitarization, the general situation in Europe from both the political and military points of view presented an entirely different aspect from that which it presents today.

Europe was moving towards disarmament and her political organization was to be founded solely on the immovable principles of law sanctioned by international engagements. The land, sea and air forces were far less redoubtable and their tendencies manifested themselves in the sense of decrease. At that time Turkey signed the restrictive clauses of the Straits Convention with the assurance given her by Article 18 which had just added to the guarantee contained in Article 10 of the Pact of the League of Nations the engagement that the signatories, in any case four great Powers, agreed to undertake jointly, by means decided upon for that purpose by the Council of the League, the defense of the Straits in case of a menace.

Since then the situation which existed in the Black Sea has taken on an aspect of concord, reassuring in every respect, whereas uncertainty gradually began to prevail in the Mediterranean, naval conferences having manifested a tendency for the development of rearmament and naval shipbuilders will soon launch onto the sea vessels of an as yet unattained power. In the domain of the air the curve is rising upwards dizzily, and continental and insular fortifications are being constantly multiplied.

During this complete change of conditions the only guarantee destined to prevent the total insecurity of the Straits has just disappeared in its turn, and while the Powers most concerned proclaim the existence of a menace of a general conflagration, Turkey at her most vulnerable point finds herself exposed to the worst dangers, without any counterbalance in this disquieting insecurity.

From: M.A. Istanbul Report No. 6629 May 11, 1936.

In compliance with the urgent demands addressed to Turkey the latter accepted the demilitarisation of the Straits at that time entirely occupied by foreign forces after having long weighed, in the light of existing conditions, the value of the minima guarantees which were being granted to her "in order that the demilitarisation of the Straits and of the neighboring zones should not become, from the military point of view, the cause of an unjustified danger to Turkey."

The importance attributed by the signatories to Article 18 of the Convention, which sanctions the guarantee of security as bound indissolubly to the entirety of the clauses regulating the regime of the Straits, was so great that they made the solemn declaration that the guarantee in question constituted an integral part of the clauses of demilitarisation and of freedom of passage. This amounts to saying that without an effective, practical, and efficacious assurance it would have been impossible to impose upon Turkey a diminution of sovereignty over a portion of her territory, the security of which is as indispensable as that of the entire country.

It is likewise manifest that should this guarantee become inoperative or uncertain the balance of the entire Convention would be destroyed to the prejudice of Turkey as well as to that of the peace of Europe.

Political crises have shown clearly that the mechanism of collective guarantee moves far too slowly and that a tardy decision is likely to bring to naught in most cases the benefit of an international action. It is for this reason that Turkey, like many other Powers at the present time, could not be satisfied in 1923 with the collective guarantee which the Covenant would have provided for in her behalf as soon as she became a party to the League of Nations; that she judged insufficient the collective guarantee of all the signatories of the Straits Convention; and that only the joint guarantee of the Four Great Powers appeared to her susceptible to secure, under the then existing conditions, the minimum of security indispensable to her territorial integrity.

But if this minimum itself is weakened or rendered problematic by the political and military circumstances entirely different from those prevailing at its establishment, the Government of the Republic cannot, without making itself guilty of grave neglect, expose the whole country to the irreparable consequences of a sudden attack.

The position of the guarantors of the security of the Straits in regard to the League of Nations, and the particular circumstances which make doubtful at least the military and effective cooperation of the said guarantors as regards the objective assigned to them, are elements which have disturbed the general economy of the Convention of 1923.

It cannot be contended today that the security of the Straits is still assured by a real guarantee, and it cannot be requested of Turkey to remain indifferent in the eventuality of a dangerous deficiency.

To these considerations should be added that the Straits Convention only mentions the states of peace and of war, Turkey in the latter case being a neutral or a belligerent, without foreseeing the eventuality of a special or general menace of war and permitting Turkey to provide in that case for its legitimate defense. Now, today it has become fully evident that the most delicate phase of an external danger is precisely this phase of menace, there being the possibility that a state of war may arise unexpectedly and without any formality whatsoever.

This deficiency may in itself deprive the contemplated guarantee of their efficacy regardless of whatever may be their value.

From the beginning of its existence the Turkish Republic has traced for itself a policy of peace and good-will, the realization of which in all domains has not failed to impose upon her sacrifices often of a burdensome nature.

The Turkish Government has shown, under many circumstances which have occurred in the course of the past decade, a spirit of conciliation and of fidelity to the nation's engagements, and of sincere adherence to the cause of peace which has been appreciated by all the Powers.

The security which Turkey has always assured to others gives her the right to claim it for herself.

Circumstances, independent of the will of the signatories of Lausanne, have made inoperative the clauses established in all good faith, and as Turkey's very existence and the security of its territory are at stake,

the Government of the Republic may be induced to take before the nation the responsibility incumbent upon it by adopting measures dictated by the imperious necessity of circumstances.

Having in view the considerations exposed in the foregoing and believing with good reason that the provisions of Article 18 of the Straits Convention, dealing with the joint guarantee of the Four Great Powers, have become uncertain and inoperative and that they no longer can actually protect Turkey against an external danger aiming at its territory, the Government of the Republic has the honor to inform the Powers which took part in the negotiations of the Straits Convention that it is ready to begin pourparlers with a view to be able to arrive promptly at the conclusion of agreements destined to regulate the regime of the Straits under conditions of security, indispensable to the inviolability of Turkish territory, and in the most liberal spirit for the constant development of commercial navigation between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Comments by M/A:

As has been expected, for several years Turkey has been waiting for an opportunity to demand the right to fortify the Dardanelles. This has been the subject of constant thought and talk by official Turkey. There is not only the natural desire to defend a part of their territory and to close a road of invasion by sea, but this has also been a matter touching very deeply the pride of the Turkish people.

There have been rumors that the provisions of the treaty have been violated and that the occupation of the zone and even its fortification were begun before this note was written. There is probably no truth in these reports. Turkey has to a certain extent violated the spirit of the treaty by maintaining an enormous force of gendarmes in this area, the gendarmes being equipped the same as the Turkish army and a selected group of men. This is not a violation of the letter of the treaty, inasmuch as the number of gendarmes permitted to be kept in the zone is not fixed.

This note has been received favorably by all the signatories of the treaty except Italy, from whom at this date no reply has been received.

Turkey has made preparations for the fortification of the Dardanelles and has ordered from Germany the necessary guns and equipment. Details of this order are not at present available.

J. A. CRANE,
Lt.Colonel, Field Artillery,
Military Attache.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 27 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

L S
1—1236
A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

FROM Rome

Dated June 25, 1936

Rec'd 3:20 p. m.

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 2 - 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUN 26 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,

Washington.

231, June 25, 6 p. m.

767.68119/927

(GRAY) My 227, June 22, 7 p. m.

The Italian press continues to evince much interest in the Montreux conference and discusses editorially the problems involved although not stating Italy's exact position and avoiding comment on the Italian note of June 22 to Turkey which is described as expressing the utmost reservation on the discussions taking place without Italy's participation. Inspired newspapers had avoided any polemics until this evening when the government spokesman attacks the TIMES for its further reference to the Italian threat in the Mediterranean. In the most emphatic terms he denies such a threat and states that not only has Mussolini's interview with the DAILY TELEGRAPH cleared up Italian policy vis à vis England but her past policy toward Greece and Turkey has been wholly clear and reassuring. Other clarifications, he adds, will be given shortly. Gayda further asserts that it was Italy's responsible conduct that kept the Ethiopian conflict from spreading to Europe and not the

British

FILED
JUL 6 1936

767.68119/926

740.0011 Mutual Guarantee (Mediterranean)

British fleet as Hoare stated the other day. On the other hand England's present accords with France and other Mediterranean countries are contrary to the letter and spirit of Italy's previous agreements with Greece, Turkey and France which aimed at equilibrium and peace and along with the announced increase of England's permanent Mediterranean forces and military bases have profoundly altered the balance of power to Italy's detriment. Faced with a group of ambitious powers desiring to extend the economic siege in a potential encircling naval siege Italy continues her land, sea and air preparations although still firmly determined not to provoke a conflict but rather to promote a Mediterranean agreement which would give each power the appropriate guarantees including rights of navigation for all countries through the Straits. Until such an agreement is reached, he concludes, a state of hostility will continue in the Mediterranean for which all the other Mediterranean powers save Spain are exclusively responsible and which make Italy's preparations of selfdefense more than legitimate. (END GRAY)

CONFIDENTIAL. There has been no corroboration of alleged conversations between England and Italy on

the Mediterranean problem referred to in the last paragraph of my telegram under reference and in fact an official of the Ministry of Marine informed the Naval Attache to the Embassy that the only discussions which had taken place so far between the two governments was an intimation to Grandi in London that the matter involved in the Straits conference would require the attention of the two governments after sanctions had been lifted. The same official said that Eden's declaration on the continuation of the Mediterranean naval accords to which, as stated in my telegram 220, June 19, 8 p. m., the Italian Government was inclined to take exception was one of the factors finally determining Italy's refusal to attend the meeting at Montreux. The official volunteered the personal opinion that the interests of Germany were involved in the Straits conference as well as those of the United States and in this latter connection he referred to number twelve of Wilson's fourteen points.

765.84/4687

I understand that the Turkish Ambassador here who has just returned from Montreux has expressed the opinion that Italy will eventually participate in the conference and will probably attempt to enlarge the scope of the conference to include the regulation of the Mediterranean problem on a broader basis.

KIRK

CSB

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LMS

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased ~~before~~ before being communicated to anyone. ~~1936~~ (B)

Istanbul

Dated June 26, 1936

FROM

Rec'd 2:40 p. m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 27 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

To Navy 6/30/36

Secretary of State,

Washington.

26, June 26, 3 p. m.

Department's 32, June 25, 6 p. m.

July 3 1936

In view of delay in consulting Ambassador I submit following personal opinion: statements made by Foreign Minister to the Ambassador on April 22 and to me on April 10, see bottom of page Embassy's despatch No. 20 April ~~(*)~~ 14 are official declarations of Turkish Government's policy with respect to commercial navigation of the Straits and were deliberately given as such. That navigation is to be at least as free as under Lausanne convention and vessels of all countries whether or not signatory to new convention will benefit without any discrimination whatsoever. Text of convention proposed by Turks at Montreux bears out this view. Statements concerning commercial navigation essentially the same as those made to us were also made by Dr. Aras and Foreign Office officials to several other representatives of non-conference powers. From the outset the Turks have spared no efforts to make their position on this point perfectly clear to everybody.

SHAW

CSB

(*) Apparent omission.

767.68119/927

FILED

JUN 25 1937

Division of
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
JUN 28 1937
Department of State

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B)

FROM

Geneva (part air)

Dated June 26, 1936

Rec'd 6:42 a. m. 28th

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUN 25 1937
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 29 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

254, June 26, 5 p. m.

767.68119/924

(GRAY). Consulate's 244, June 23, noon, conference on regime of the Straits. (END GRAY).

I learn from delegations here of participating powers that the following are the essentials of the positions of the governments, either expressed or unexpressed, up to the present stage of the Conference.

Commercial Questions:

Great Britain, Bulgaria and Rumania--The safeguarding of commercial shipping interests by some form of international control or regulations.

Remilitarization and transit of warships:

Russia--Free ingress and egress for Black Sea powers; opposes equality of rights in this for other powers. Black Sea closed to other powers except for courtesy visits of small units unless in implementation of League or regional pact decisions. Except as last stated no non-riparian belligerent power could enter Black Sea during war.

Bulgaria

FILED
JUL 1 - 1937

767.68119/928

1C

Bulgaria and Rumania--Opposed to provisions described in the last sentence of foregoing but generally favorable to mutual assistance arrangements.

France--Broadly speaking, policy not yet disclosed except its support of mutual assistance features of Russian position.

Italy--The Italian representative here made a "personal but official" visit to Montreux and exposed his Government's position as a general reservation on all questions concerning remilitarization and transit of warships. His somewhat cryptic thesis on remilitarization was that Turkey should be permitted to remilitarize but not to fortify the Straits. He also indicated opposition to any discrimination in warship transit favoring Black Sea powers.

Turkey--To prohibit the passage of warships through the Straits in sufficient strength at any one time to threaten Stamboul. With the foregoing exception riparian states to have unrestricted passage. Other states only for courtesy visits. Generally concentrating on right to fortify. Envisaging failure of ratification of general convention, desires to be accorded right to fortify immediately upon signature or under terms of special

separate protocol, also to be accorded in the same manner the privilege of closing the Straits to non-riparian warships in case of a threat of war.

Japan--If riparian warships are permitted egress from the Black Sea non-riparian warships should have ingress on equal terms. Opposes any reference to League in the convention and declines to give any commitments to act in defense of the Straits.

Great Britain--In general support of Japan on first item of Japanese position. In general making reservations on all points without disclosing its hand.

The best informed general estimate here is that Great Britain is awaiting Italy's entering the Conference when Great Britain, Japan and Italy will concert their tactics to achieve a battling up of Russia in the Black Sea. In that feature, however, which presents itself as an Italian-Balkan issue, it is not known to what extent Great Britain may support Italy or maneuver for a middle position.

WWC GILBERT

Gray 6/29 - 12:10.
6/29 - 12:20.
6/29 - 12:30.

PREPARING OFFICE
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TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

TO BE TRANSMITTED
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1936 JUN 29 PM 5 21

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Washington,

June 29, 1936.

6 pm

767.68119/928

AMERICAN CONSUL,

GENEVA (SWITZERLAND).

81

Please repeat your 254, June 26, 5 p.m. regarding Straits Conference to Embassy Istanbul.

~~Hull~~ Phillips
Acting

NE PHILIPS

WE

6/29/36
am W

CR
JUN 29 1936 PM

MO

Enciphered by .....

Sent by operator ..... M., ..., 19....., ...

D. C. R.—No. 50

1—1462 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

July 7 1936

JS **TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (B)

GENEVA (part air)

FROM

Dated June 29, 1936

Rec'd 30th 3:40 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JUL 8 1936 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Division of FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS JUL 11 1936 Department of State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE JUL 1 1936 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JUL 1936 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

265, June 29, 2 p.m.

Regime of the Straits.

One. A member of the British delegation to the Montreux Conference informs me that the British position vis à vis Russia, described in the final paragraph of my No. 254, June 26, 5 p.m., had in fact been held by the delegation in the opening days of the Conference but that the present British policy make a definite turning toward an acceptance of the Turkish demands and also of the Russian, with some "escalator" proviso in respect of the latter to the effect that an increase beyond a certain point in the Russian Black Sea fleet would permit a proportionately larger ingress of naval units of non-Black Sea powers. He added that satisfactory conversations had been had with Litvinov and Aras along these lines.

FILED JUL 13 1936

He saw, however, a lack of fixity in any British policy in part, at least, due to possible attitudes which might be assumed by Italy and Japan. The Japanese, appear to be the middle, holding stiffly to their stand as described in my telegram under reference, and there is furthermore

767.68119/929

furthermore, a general feeling in the British delegation that the attitudes of Japan or Italy, or both, might break up the conference.

Two. The Greek Minister informs me that the Balkan Entente is unitedly in support of Turkey; but that he has the impression that unless London makes some approach to Rome respecting a general Mediterranean settlement, Italy will not gp to Montreux.

GILBERT

SMS NPL

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/929

July 7 1936

767.68119/929

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his strictly confidential information a paraphrase of a telegram regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosure:
Paraphrase of telegram No. 265,
June 29, 2 p. m., from Geneva.

NE RAR/GC

JUL 8 1936 PM

A true copy of the ~~signed~~ original.

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM NO. 265, JUNE 29, 2 P.M., FROM GENEVA, SWITZERLAND.

The British position with reference to Russia, outlined in the last paragraph of the Consulate's telegram No. 254* of June 26, 5 p. m., had actually been held, a member of the British delegation to the Montreux Conference states, at the beginning of the conference but subsequently British policy had been definitely modified in order to meet both Turkish and Russian demands on condition that some "escalator" provision be made to provide for ingress of a proportionately larger number of naval units of non-Black Sea powers in the event that the strength of the Russian fleet should exceed a certain limit. The British delegate added that this matter had been discussed satisfactorily with Litvinov and Aras.

The delegate foresaw however a certain instability in British policy due to such positions as Italy and Japan might take. It appears that the Japanese are holding unyieldingly to their position described in the Consulate's telegram No. 254. Furthermore, it is felt in the British delegation that the stands taken by Japan and Italy might cause a break-up of the Conference.

According to the Greek Minister the Balkan Entente is unitedly supporting Turkey. The Minister also has the impression that Italy may not go to Montreux unless the British approach the Italians regarding a general Mediterranean settlement.

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* Copy transmitted to Navy Department on July 3, 1936.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

CA 1—1336

FROM Gray

GENEVA (PART AIR)

Dated June 30, 1936.

Rec'd July 1, 5:14 p.m.

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 3 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 2 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

270, June 30, 5 p.m.

Department's telegram 81, June 29, 6 p.m.

My 117, 189, 244, 254 and 265 were currently transmitted by mail to Istanbul. Am transmitting by mail or by telegraph when urgency seems desirable all Italo-Ethiopian and most European political situation telegrams to Rome, Paris, and London and when pertinent to Berlin. Have not indicated such distribution in my telegrams due to the cost of constant reiteration.

GILBERT.

SMS

FILED
JUL 6 1936

767.68119/930

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.68119/931

SEE 765.84/4747 FOR Telegram #240, 4 pm.

FROM Italy (Kirk) DATED June 29, 1936.
TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Straits Conference. Difficulty confronting the Italian government in entering into any discussions on the Mediterranean problems while the Naval accords directed against Italy in that part of the world are still in force.

wth

NG

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

1—1836

FROM

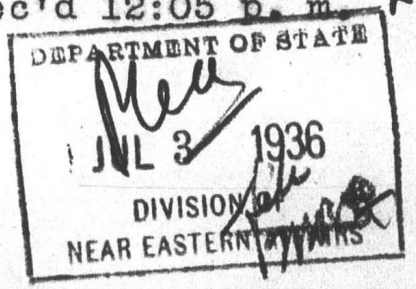
LMS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B)

Istanbul

Dated July 3, 1936

Rec'd 12:05 p. m.

Letter to Navy 7/6/36 RAH/LS



Secretary of State,

Washington.

28, July 3, 2 p. m.

In a conversation with Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs yesterday, he fully confirmed statements made in Embassy's 26, June 26, 1927 3 p. m., as to Turkish policy respecting commercial navigation of the Straits and specifically authorized me so to inform you.

MAC MURRAY

KLP

July 8 1936

767.68119/932

July 8 1936

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/932

767.68119/932

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I refer to my letter of July 3, 1936, enclosing paraphrases of four telegrams on the subject of the Straits Conference at Montreux, among which was telegram No. 26 of June 26, 3 p.m., from the Embassy at Istanbul, regarding certain declarations made to the Ambassador and the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs with respect to the freedom of navigation of the Straits which Turkey proposes to accord commercial vessels of all countries whether or not signatory to such new convention as may be concluded.

The Department has now received another telegram on this subject from the Ambassador at Istanbul, dated July 3, in which he reports that the statements made in the Embassy's telegram No. 26 were fully confirmed to him by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the course of

a

The Honorable

Claude A. Swanson,

Secretary of the Navy,

Washington, D. C.

a conversation on July 2. The Acting Foreign Minister specifically authorized the Ambassador so to inform this Government.

Sincerely yours,

Cordell Hull

Assistant Secretary.

UR
Jul. 8 1936.

A true copy of the signed original.

Routing

JUL 7 1936

NE RAH/LS

JUL 8 - 1936

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, June 22, 1936.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 17 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 17 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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JUL 15 1936
5
1936 JUL 7 AM 10 59
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 845

Subject: Montreux Conference.

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

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Yes No

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 8 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the Bulgarian delegation to the Conference on the remilitarization of the Straits which opens at Montreux on June 22, is composed of,

Mr. N. Nikolaeff, Secretary General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs - Chief of the delegation.

Mr. N. Mentchiloff, Minister to Bern and Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations First delegate.

Mr. P. Neykoff, Minister Plenipotentiary, Chief of the Political Division of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs - Second delegate.

The delegation is accompanied by four experts:

Captain Varikletchkoff, Aide de Camp of His Majesty the

767.68119/933
JUL 21 1936
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JUL 21 1936

the King, naval officer; Mr. Slavianoff, Chief of the Section for Navigation in the Direction of Railways and Ports, and two secretaries of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. After the technical commissions are set up in Monteux part of the delegation will proceed to Geneva to attend the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

No official statements have been made as to the views that the delegation will express on behalf of the Bulgarian Government, but it is known that they are carrying instructions in conformity with the recent Bulgarian note whereby Turkey was notified that Bulgaria agreed in principle to the remilitarization of the Straits. On the other questions - the transit of war and commercial vessels in times of peace and war - the Bulgarian delegation will probably take the same line as that of the Rumanian delegation in general, and will demand security of Bulgarian sea commerce.

Mr. Kiosseivanoff will not attend the Conference as was first expected, apparently on account of a possible reconstruction of the Cabinet and perhaps because of the King's visit to Italy, where the Queen is now staying with her family, which is now rumored.

Respectfully yours,

F. A. Sterling

F. A. Sterling,
American Minister.

File No. 800

FAS/JRT.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Sofia, Bulgaria, June 23, 1936.

July 14 1936

No. 244

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
COPY IN DEP

R-6011 (Dep) Straits

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Subject: Montreux Conference.

767.68119/934

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
1936 JUL 7 AM 10 59

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

To Davy - 7/13/36
MBB/LS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 8 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

File MBB

FILED
JUL 21 1936

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose a translation of the declaration made by the chief Bulgarian Delegate to the Conference called by the Turkish Government concerning the remilitarization of the Straits which opened at Montreux yesterday.

note 767.74

The Department will note in the declaration certain interesting points, either directly or indirectly expressed by the Bulgarian Delegate, to wit:

1. Friendship with Turkey.

2. Sympathy with the Turkish point of view that the failure of the victorious nations in the Great War to disarm - in fact, they have increased their armaments - has exposed the defeated nations, whose armaments were limited by treaty, to a greatly reduced security.

3.

3. Approval of the Turkish method of approach to the subject of revision of treaties by negotiation rather than by unilateral action or violence.

4. Bulgaria herself reserves the right in the future to ask for a revision of the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly and for an outlet to the Aegean Sea.

Respectfully yours,

F. A. Sterling,
American Minister.

Enclosure:
Translation of declaration.

File No. 800

FAS/JRT.

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 244,
of June 23, 1936, from the American
Legation at Sofia, Bulgaria.

DECLARATION OF THE BULGARIAN DELEGATION TO THE MONTREUX CONFERENCE MADE BY Mr.NICOLAEFF, CHIEF OF THE DELEGATION, ON JUNE 22d, 1936.

TRANSLATION.

"The representation of the Government of the Turkish Republic aiming at a revision of the restrictive clauses of the Convention on the Straits, was accorded a favorable reception in Sofia.

"This attitude of the Bulgarian Government was inspired by the old friendship which binds Bulgaria and Turkey, but it is dictated at the same time by considerations of a different nature, which coincide with the basic motives of the Turkish demand.

"The note of the Turkish Government points to conditions thouroughly different from those which existed at the time the Convention of Lausanne was signed. It is a statement the veracity of which cannot be contested. Thirteen years ago the impression prevailed that the Great Powers were going to gradually reduce their armaments. It was, moreover, their obligation under the Peace Treaties of 1919 signed under their auspices. According to these treaties the disarmed states had to accomplish the mission of pioneers. The other states were to follow in a rythm corresponding to the organization of collective security. Disarmament was not to mean reduced security for the states to which restrictions were imposed.

"What happened in reality? The limitation in armaments foreseen in the treaties could not be arrived at, On the contrary, in spite of all efforts in the sphere of disarmament, we witness a headbreaking race of armaments.

"What is under the circumstances the situation of the small states which continue to be submitted to restrictions of military nature? They are more exposed than ever because the system of collective security such as it existed until now is obviously unable to meet the lack of means to insure their security. Thus the limitation of their sovereignty

imposed...

imposed in the name of a new international organization, means in reality a reduced security which represents a constant danger for peace. Disarmed by the treaties and being, as regards her security, in a less favorable situation than Turkey, Bulgaria meets with sympathy the demand of the Turkish Government aiming to disengage the country from limitations which reduce, without corresponding guarantees, the security of state attached to peace. Bulgaria considers that the motives contained in the note of April 11, are convincing.

"Certain limitative clauses of the Convention of Lausanne are inapplicable in the present circumstances. The Turkish Government considers that they cannot be maintained without representing a danger for peace. It consequently thinks that a revision of the Convention is justified.

"In order to obtain it, the Turkish Government addressed itself directly to the signatory powers the approval of which is necessary.

"Bulgaria is one of the signatory powers. She has a Treaty of friendship with Turkey. In this double capacity she gives her approval for a revision of the Convention and will give her co-operation to that effect.

"Bulgaria considers that the amendment of treaties which have become inapplicable, effected by pacific methods is a great acquisition of the efforts to arrive by stages at a solution of international disputes which divide the world and imperil peace. It would be a geat misfortune for humanity if we return to the conviction that a modification of impossible international situations can be effected only by violence.

"The remilitarization of the Straits raises a problem of the greatest interest for Bulgaria. Bulgaria has a coast on the Black Sea, but no outlet to a free sea; our foreign trade is effected to a large extent through the Straits.

"The Bulgarian Government notes with keen satisfaction that the Turkish note of April 11 takes into consideration the vital interests of the states on the Black Sea. It sees in it a token that the new status which we are called to work out, will contain all guarantees insuring at all times and under all circumstances the freedom of the navigation though the Straits.

July 14 1936

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/934

767.68119/934

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his information copies of despatches Nos. 243 and 244, dated June 22 and June 23, 1936, respectively, from the American Minister at Sofia, Bulgaria, regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosures:

From Legation, Sofia,
No. 243, June 22, 1936;

From Legation, Sofia,
No. 244, June 23, 1936.

NE MBB/LS

JUL 14 1936.

A true copy of the signed original.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1760. Rome, June 25, 1936.

Subject: Remilitarization of the Straits.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 21 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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" " M. I. D. JUL 17 1936
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 8 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

The Homorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

767.68119/926

FILED
JUL 23 1936

With reference to my telegram No. 231 of June 25th I have the honor to inform the Department that the complete reserve formerly maintained in the Italian press as to Italy's attitude toward the revision of the Lausanne Treaty has now given way to frequent editorial discussions which between the lines imply that the Turkish project is not favorably regarded and that the Russian demands advanced at Montreux are unacceptable, while it is openly and emphatically declared that the Straits question cannot be settled without Italy's consent, that Italy will not join in discussions until sanctions are lifted, and that there can be no Mediterranean accord until sanctionist mentality among the Mediterranean Powers has definitely disappeared. There is to date, however, no detailed and unequivocal expression of Italian views.

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The Italian note to the Presidency of the Montreux Conference under date of June 22nd is mentioned briefly in all newspapers in the course of despatches from abroad but not referred to in editorial columns. The fullest description given of the text of the communication appeared in the Milan SOLE of June 23rd, which stated that the note pointed out that the Italian Government had replied to the Turkish invitation of April 11th to the effect that "the present situation is not the most favorable for the examination of a question of such interest", and expressed the opinion that the meeting should take place after all questions pending at Geneva had been settled. The note, according to the SOLE, then went on to say that:

> "Continuing to be of this opinion, the R. Government confirms that it is ready to participate in the labors of the Conference just as soon as the situation is cleared up in its various aspects. Meanwhile the Italian Government, in view of the interest which Italy, as a pre-eminently Mediterranean country and a signatory of the Treaty of Lausanne, attaches to the question, must express the most explicit reservations regarding the discussions that will take place in the forthcoming meetings and regarding the examination of the problems which will be considered therein."

The Vatican OSSERVATORE ROMANO of June 23rd reported that there was much comment in the corridors of the Conference on the fact that the Turks had not yet published this communication, presumably due to Rustu Aras's hope that the Italians would withdraw or mitigate its statements, but that the Italian Government persisted in an "anti-revisionist attitude". No mention of this feature appears in the Italian press.

As

As to the failure to send an Italian delegation to the Conference, the newspapers here explain briefly that this is in line with the general Italian attitude that there can be no cooperation in Europe on her part until the sanctionist front is liquidated. As the Embassy reported, however, the Italians apparently had intended to send a delegation but late in the day decided against this step. It has been stated in Italian navy circles that such decision was due to Eden's announcement in the Commons that the Mediterranean accords concluded last December would continue in effect after the suspension of sanctions. This declaration was ill received in Italian circles (my telegram No. 220 of June 19th), although it may be noted that the authoritative GIORNALE D'ITALIA offered no editorial comment on the matter, while its London correspondent took the stand, in opposition to certain other Italian newspapers (chiefly the TRIBUNA), that the continuation of the accords was a temporary and secondary matter designed to reassure the smaller Mediterranean Powers and that Grandi had been fully informed on the matter ahead of time. This same newspaper today reports from Montreux that the insinuations of certain correspondents regarding British plans to reach an agreement without Italian cooperation are ridiculous, and it expresses the conviction that the British themselves consider the existing Mediterranean accords just as inefficacious for their own interests as sanctions are. England, however, in this correspondent's opinion,

cannot

cannot reverse her policy too abruptly but trusts that once sanctions are lifted the basis will be laid for new Italo-British relations and for the consolidation of peace. Certain other correspondents likewise point out that the revision of British policy must necessarily be achieved step by step to avoid too severe a shock to public opinion.

Despite this tact and moderation evinced in its news columns, the GIORNALE D'ITALIA this evening carries a strongly worded editorial by the Government spokesman in reply to the London TIMES' reference to the necessity of keeping the Mediterranean open and "unmolested by the ambition of one nation only". Gayda's remarks, however, were addressed apparently to the opposition in England rather than to the British Government itself, since he asserted that the TIMES was attempting to use this mythical Italian menace to win imperialist circles over to the anti-Fascist machinations of the opposition. The writer demanded proof of the Italian menace following the Ethiopian conquest, which referred solely to the interior of Africa and not to maritime positions, which remained as before. If the establishment of a colonial empire between the 4th and 17th latitude in itself was detrimental to the situation of a sea between the 30th and 40th latitude, he remarked, it followed that Italy and other Mediterranean Powers had lived under perpetual menace ever since England, "who had no birthrights in the Mediterranean", established herself in Malta, Cyprus, Egypt, the Sudan, and Palestine, and

France

France took possession of Algeria and Morocco. It was true, he said, that the Ethiopian conquest had heightened Italy's power: but this did not mean that her power was directed against England or any Mediterranean country. Gayda pointed out that Mussolini had made Italy's intentions toward England clear in his statements to the DAILY TELEGRAPH, while her intentions toward Greece and Turkey had been unequivocally indicated in previous agreements with those countries, and in Mussolini's action in conciliating them, thus terminating a long period of open or latent conflict between Greece and Turkey, which had been rendered more acute by British action in urging Greece on Smyrna. Other clarifications, he added, would be given in a few days. Still more important as evidence of Italy's peaceful intentions was the fact that the conflict did not spread from Ethiopia to the Mediterranean. Hoare yesterday attributed the merit for this limitation of the war to the presence of the British fleet: a statement to which no Italian subscribes, in view of the fact that the British mobilization very seriously threatened to provoke war in the Mediterranean. Credit for this achievement is given to Mussolini's sense of responsibility and resolute determination to avoid any incident.

There was a Mediterranean threat, however, Gayda insisted: namely the naval accords between England and France, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey directed against Italy, which were contrary to the letter and spirit of previous Italo-Greek, Italo-Turkish, and Italo-French agreements: combined with the new naval policy of Great Britain (in-

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crease in permanent forces and feverish construction of military bases) represented a profound alteration of the Mediterranean balance of power to Italy's exclusive detriment. The TIMES formula must thus be reversed to be accurate, he remarked: Italy, who had a vital interest in the Mediterranean, today found her peace and liberty violated by "an opposing group of ambitious Powers, who would like to prolong the economic siege of sanctions in a latent naval siege through an encircling coalition". That being the case, Italy naturally continued to build up her land, sea, and air armaments, although simultaneously continuing her resolve to avoid any conflict. More than that, she was working to bring about a more honest and general Mediterranean accord which would give all Powers fair guarantees, including those referring to freedom of navigation throughout the Straits, and therefore would have a basis and a purpose diametrically opposed to the basis and purposes of the sanctionist naval accords. Until such an agreement was reached, Gayda concluded, it was obvious that an unbalanced and hostile situation existed in the Mediterranean, which made every Italian defense legitimate and was to be blamed upon the other Mediterranean Powers, with the exception of Spain.

Criticism of Turkey is held in abeyance, although Gayda on June 22nd echoed in polite terms the Italian conviction that the alleged danger in the Mediterranean was a deliberate falsehood on Turkey's part. In Italian circles the emphasis upon Turkey's good behavior in consulting the other Powers rather than proceeding to unilateral revision,

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is

is much derided, although the press itself is rather tactful in its references to the subject. In the first place, the Italians say that if Turkey had not spontaneously decided to fortify the Straits, England would have suggested it to her - and probably did so - since she considered Turkey an ally against Italy. With the backing of England and the moral approval of the League overt unilateral action was not necessary. Furthermore, it is recalled that at the time the question first came up publicly there were very contradictory reports as to whether Turkey had or had not already occupied the Straits, and it is a foregone conclusion that the Lausanne Treaty had already been to a large extent violated before the Montreux Conference ever began and that Turkey's present endeavor at Montreux is to seek a bill of indemnity for her previous action and for what yet remains to be done to obtain her ends.

The French attitude has not been discussed by most writers here. The TRIBUNA, however, interpreted the attitude of the POPULAIRE and OEUVRE in connection with the continuation of the Mediterranean accords to mean that France had the idea of bargaining her consent to such a permanent arrangement for British compensation vis-a-vis Germany. She would thus be killing two birds with one stone: first, offending Fascist Italy; second, obtaining a guarantee for French security. The French idea, the newspaper remarked, was apparently to isolate Germany and Italy and entrust Europe's destinies to Great Britain,

France,

France, Russia, and the Little Entente. The writer had little confidence in the success of such a move, believing England uneasy over Soviet action in France and ill-disposed to alienate Germany, with whom she desired an air pact. The Popular Front plans, he concluded, were destined to fail miserably in everything but the creation of further friction in Europe.

Russia's demands are not commented on editorially but the tone used by correspondents in describing the Russian attitude seems to indicate entire disagreement with Litvinoff's proposals.

As to rumored Anglo-Italian negotiations regarding a Mediterranean agreement, there is no corroboration to date. It is in fact denied, frequently though not officially, that there have been any negotiations, and today's STAMPA reports from London that well-informed circles definitely state there is no agreement between the two countries on Mediterranean affairs. It is nevertheless felt that England means to oppose the Russian demands - as it is intimated Italy also does - and that she has no intention of permitting the Franco-Soviet alliance to play a decisive part in European affairs through the Mediterranean channel, if she can help it - a view which Italy also would seem to share. Accordingly it is felt that even if no formal progress has been made toward an Anglo-Italian agreement, the evolution of the present European situation and Britain's own imperial problems are bringing the two countries closer together and that an ultimate accord is inevitable unless the "midsummer madmen" should gain the upper hand. And

there

there seems little doubt that the Italians generally would be pleased to establish solid relations with England, feeling that this is entirely possible from their viewpoint now that Italy's African conquest has been unexpectedly complete and that there could be no loss of prestige for herself in such an alignment: quite the opposite in fact.

Incidentally it may be noted that Lord Stanhope's designation as head of the British delegation to the Montreux Conference did not please the Italians in the least, to judge from the remarks of the London correspondent of the TRIBUNA, who on June 17th stated that since Italy would necessarily be one of the principal signatories of any Mediterranean pact that might be discussed at Montreux, Lord Stanhope, who had habitually "used a language so anti-Italian as to make the entire past attitude of his chief, Anthony Eden, seem rosewater in comparison", scarcely seemed the best choice.

German press comment on the Montreux Conference is carefully noted in all newspapers, which, however, have little to say as to Germany's own specific interests in Mediterranean affairs. It may be noted, however, that editorials referring to the question frequently bring in allusions to Germany as an indispensable factor in any accord affecting European organization.

Respectfully yours,

A. Kirk.

Alexander Kirk
Charge d'Affaires ad interim.

eh/ajl
710.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Istanbul, Turkey, June 22, 1936.

No. 56

SUBJECT: Montreux Conference.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

The departure of the principal Turkish delegates for Montreux took place during the past week. They are:

Dr. Aras, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Bay Numan Menemencioglu, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is a veteran of the Ottoman diplomatic service and in recent years has been the force that has kept the Ministry running with reasonable smoothness. His standing with both the President of the Republic and the President of the Council of Ministers is of the best, and his fairness and helpfulness have been and are greatly appreciated by the Diplomatic Corps at Ankara. With Bay Ziya, Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he drafted the Turkish

Government's

Government's note of April 10, 1936, on the rearming of the Straits. He has just made an extended trip which took him to Belgrade, Bucharest, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, and London.

General Asim, Deputy Chief of the General Staff. He is generally credited with being the brains of the Turkish military establishment and the real power behind his chief, Marshal Fevzi Çakmak. He is German trained and a stiff and rigid type of soldier.

Bay Necmeddin Sadik. He has been for some years a Deputy and a journalist, and is at present Turkey's permanent representative at Geneva.

Bay Fethi, Turkish Ambassador at London.

Bay Suad, Turkish Ambassador at Paris.

Before the departure of the principal delegates from Ankara, the President of the Republic returned to the capital to preside over a meeting of the Council of Ministers at which the President of the Grand National Assembly and the Chief of the General Staff were present. At this meeting the final instructions for the Montreux Conference were discussed and approved.

Certain sidelights and items of information bearing on the problems to be considered at Montreux are worth recording. In the first place I gather that recently the British have rather stiffened their attitude in favor of freedom of passage of the Straits by war vessels, although they would be prepared to concede that previous notice should be given the Turks. On the other hand, I was told less than a week ago by a well-informed Turkish official that British attention was so effectively concentrated

upon

upon the eastern Mediterranean and a possible threat from the Dodecanese Islands that the whole problem of the Straits seemed to them of small consequence. This same official defined the Turkish point of view with respect to war vessels passing through the Straits as limitation in terms of a ratio with Turkish naval strength. The Russians, on the other hand, said this official, will formulate at Montreux rather more varied and complex demands in this connection with a view, of course, to protecting themselves in the Black Sea.

The papers recently reported a British-Turkish military alliance. A high official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told me that this report was put out in order to obtain a denial and that neither the British nor the Turks would be so foolish as to fall into the trap. He said there was no alliance and he implied that such an idea fitted in neither with British nor Turkish fundamental policies. He added, however, that the relations between Turkey and Great Britain at the present time were characterized by complete mutual confidence. On this point I have no doubt that he spoke the truth. Both countries are disturbed over the problem of the Eastern Mediterranean. For years Turkey has been worried over the presence of the Italians in the Dodecanese and there are signs that British sentiments may now be developing along somewhat similar lines.

741.67/11

In fact the impression that the Straits problem is a small part of the very much more important problem of the Eastern Mediterranean can hardly escape the most casual of observers. The Turks, I believe, would be fully prepared to enter a Mediterranean Pact and, in fact, are of

the

the opinion that the League can be reformed effectively only by a more precise setting forth of the duties and obligations of the countries of a particular region. Clearly these problems will demand a high order of statesmanship and the experts will be virtually left out of the picture. That is perhaps the reason why with the exception of the British and Greek representatives on the Straits Commission and possibly also of the newly appointed French Ambassador, Monsieur Ponsot, no foreign diplomat on duty in Turkey is participating in the work of the Montreux Conference.

The purchase of war material for the rearming of the Straits has been and is to the fore. An order has already been placed with Skoda for heavy artillery and a further order will in the near future be placed with Krupp.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

X

G. Howland Shaw.

G. Howland Shaw,
Counselor of Embassy.

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GHS:mej

4 carbon copies
Received

Copies sent to Embassies in Berlin, London, Moscow, Paris, Rome, Tokyo; Legations in Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia; and Consulate in Geneva.

July 16 1936

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/936

CONFIDENTIAL

767.68119/936

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his information a copy of despatch No. 56, dated June 22, 1936, from the American Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at Istanbul, Turkey, regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Istanbul,
June 22, 1936.

NE RAH/LS

JUL 16 1936 PM

A true copy of the signed original.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Istanbul, Turkey, June 24, 1936.

No. 58

Subject: Proposed Text of the New Straits Convention.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 11 1936
A.C/C

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 15 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

July 11 1936

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK

	Yes	No
To the Field		✓
In U. S. A.	✓	

M.I.D.
RAH.

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DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 6 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JUL 13 1936

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 8 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

To Navy 2/9/36 RAH/LS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

In case it has not reached the Department from some other source, I enclose herewith in French and in translation the text of the Straits Convention as proposed by the Turks at the Montreux Conference on June 22nd, and as given out by the semi-official AGENCE D'ANATOLIE and published in the local press on June 23rd.

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2/

FILED
JUL 18 1936

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

G. Howland Shaw.

G. Howland Shaw
Counselor of Embassy.

Enclosures:
1. Copy of Text;
2. Translation thereof.

720
GHS:er

767.68119/937

Enclosure No./to Despatch No. 58

of June 24, 1936, from the Embassy at Istanbul.

COPY

SOURCE: LA REPUBLIQUE,
of June 23, 1936,
No. 4027.

TEXTE DU PROJET DE CONVENTION

proposé par la Turquie à la Conférence de Montreux.

La Bulgarie, l'Empire Britannique, la France, la Grèce, l'Italie, le Japon, la Roumanie, la Turquie, l'U.R.S.S. et la Yougoslavie,

animés du désir de réglementer le passage et la navigation dans le détroit des Dardanelles, la mer de Marmara et le Bosphore, compris sous la dénomination générale de "Détroits" de manière à sauvegarder les intérêts du commerce international dans le cadre de la sécurité de la Turquie, ont résolu de remplacer par une nouvelle convention celle conclue à Lausanne le 24 juillet 1923 qu'ils reconnaissent et déclarent abrogée, et ont nommé à cet effet pour leurs plénipotentiaires respectifs, savoir:

.....
.....

lesquels, après avoir exhibé leurs pleins pouvoirs reconnus en bonne et due forme, sont convenus des dispositions suivantes:

ARTICLE 1.- Le passage et la navigation des navires de commerce et des bâtiments de guerre dans les détroits seront dorénavant réglés par les dispositions de la présente convention.

SECTION 1.- Navires de Commerce, y Compris Navires-Hôpitaux, Yachts et Bâteaux de Pèche.

ARTICLE 2.- En temps de paix, les navires de commerce

merce y compris les navires-hôpitaux, yachts et bâteaux de pèche jouiront de la complète liberté de navigation et de passage de jour et de nuit quels que soient le pavillon et le chargement, sans aucune formalité, taxe ou charge quelconque, sous réserve des services rendus tels que service sanitaire, de pilotage, de phares, de remorquage au autres.

Pour faciliter la perception des droits se rapportant aux services susmentionnés, les navires de commerce franchissant les détroits devront signaler aux postes indiqués par le gouvernement turc, leur nom, leur nationalité, leur tonnage, et leur destination.

ARTICLE 3.- En temps de guerre, la Turquie restant neutre, les navires de commerce, y compris les navires-hôpitaux, yachts et bâteaux de pèche mentionnés dans le précédent article, jouiront dans les mêmes conditions, du libre passage dans les détroits.

Il est toutefois bien entendu que cette liberté de passage sera conditionnée par les engagements qui découlent du pacte pour la Turquie comme membre de la société des nations.

ARTICLE 4.- En temps de guerre, la Turquie étant belligérante, la liberté de passage sera reconnue aux navires de commerce neutres à condition que ces navires n'assistent en aucune façon l'ennemi.

La traversée des détroits devra être effectuée pendant le jour et par la route qui sera, sur demande, indiqué par la Turquie.

ARTICLE 5.- Les navires de commerce y compris les navires-hôpitaux, yachts et bâteaux de pèche, devant pénétrer dans les détroits seront soumis au contrôle sanitaire conformément aux prescriptions turques y relatives et dans le cadre des dispositions sanitaires internationales.

Toutefois ce contrôle devra s'exercer à toute heure de la journée et de manière à n'apporter aucun retard à la navigation desdits navires.

SECTION 2.- Bâtiments de Guerre et les Navires Auxiliaires.

ARTICLE 6.- En temps de paix, les bâtiments de guerre et les navires auxiliaires, exception faite des sous-marins, auront libre passage de jour, étant bien entendu que cette liberté de passage est réservée aux seuls cas de visites de courtoisie à effectuer par les navires étrangers susmentionnés, quel que soit le pavillon

villon, sans aucune taxe ou charge quelconque et dans les conditions ci-après:

(a) Pour le passage des navires de guerre et des navires auxiliaires un préavis d'un mois dans lequel devra être précisé la destination, les noms, le genre et le nombre des navires sera adressé à la Turquie par la voie diplomatique. Lors du passage de l'unité visée par ce préavis, le commandant communiquera, sans avoir à s'arrêter, à une station de signaux à l'entrée des Dardanelles ou du Bosphore, la composition exacte des bâtiments se trouvant sous ses ordres ainsi que les renseignements complémentaires y relatifs.

(b) Dans les conditions prévues par la présente convention tout Etat non riverain de la Mer Noire pourra faire passer à travers les Détroits, des navires de guerre n'excédant pas une unité navale composée d'un croiseur et de deux torpilleurs dont le tonnage global n'excédera pas 14 mille tonnes. Ce tonnage de 14,000 tonnes représente également le maximum global admis pour les navires de guerre étrangers engagés dans la zone des Détroits.

Toutefois, si la flotte turque se trouve absente de sa base de Marmara ou si un de ses bâtiments de plus de 10,000 tonnes est provisoirement retiré de l'activité, l'unité étrangère susindiquée ne pourra traverser les Détroits qu'en deux fois. Dans ce dernier cas, si un des bâtiments de l'unité est d'un tonnage supérieur à la moitié du tonnage global de l'unité, ledit bâtiment devra effectuer la traversée isolément.

(c) Dans la Mer Noire le tonnage global des navires de guerre appartenant aux puissances non riveraines de cette mer, ne pourra excéder le chiffre de 28,000 tonnes.

(d) L'unité navale prévue à l'alinéa (b) peut être d'une composition différente à condition que les tonnages maximum prévus pour le passage des Détroits et pour l'accès à la Mer Noire ne subissent de ce fait aucune modification.

(e) Les bâtiments de guerre appartenant aux puissances non riveraines de la Mer Noire qui ont traversé les Détroits pour se rendre dans cette mer, seront tenus de quitter cette mer dans un délai maximum de 15 jours.

(f) Les bâtiments de guerre traversant les Détroits ne pourront, en aucun cas, utiliser les aéronefs dont ils seraient éventuellement

éventuellement porteurs.

(g) En aucun cas les bâtiments de guerre en transit dans les Détroits ne devront sauf en cas d'avaries ou de fortune de mer, y séjourner au délà du temps qu'il leur est nécessaire pour effectuer leur passage.

Le ravitaillement et la réparation des bâtiments de guerre seront régis par les dispositions de la convention 13 de La Haye de 1907, concernant la neutralité maritime.

(h) Les dispositions contenues dans les paragraphes a, b, d, f, g, du présent article s'appliquent également aux navires de guerre appartenant aux puissances riveraines de la Mer Noire et se rendant en Méditerranée.

Toutefois, la totalité des bâtiments envoyés ainsi en Méditerranée pourra retourner dans la Mer Noire en observant la réglementation de passage quant à la limite de force prévue au paragraphe b, et aux signaux mentionnés dans le paragraphe a, alinéa 2.

Il est entendu que si une des puissances riveraines de la Mer Noire demande à faire passer à travers les Détroits un bâtiment de guerre de sa flotte existante, dont le tonnage est supérieur au maximum admis pour la traversée, et va jusqu'à 25,000 tonnes, ce passage sera subordonné aux conditions suivantes: une autorisation préalable de la Turquie doit être obtenue et le navire doit effectuer la traversée isolément.

ARTICLE 7.- En temps de guerre, la Turquie étant neutre, les bâtiments de guerre et les navires auxiliaires jouiront du libre passage dans les Détroits aux conditions prévues dans l'article précédent.

Il sera interdit aux bâtiments de guerre des belligérants de procéder à aucune capture, d'exercer le droit de visite et de se livrer à aucun acte d'hostilité dans les Détroits.

Il est toutefois bien entendu que la liberté de passage mentionnée à l'alinéa 1er du présent article sera conditionnée par les engagements qui découlent du Pacte pour la Turquie comme membre de la Société des Nations.

ARTICLE 8.- En temps de guerre, la Turquie étant belligérante, le passage des bâtiments de guerre et des navires auxiliaires est subordonné à une autorisation spéciale

spéciale de la Turquie nonobstant les dispositions de l'article 6.

ARTICLE 9. Au cas où la Turquie se jugerait être en état de menace de guerre, elle aurait le droit d'appliquer les dispositions de l'article 8 de la présente convention en avisant la Société des Nations pour toutes fins requises et en informant les puissances signataires de la présente convention.

ARTICLE 10.- Les bâtiments de guerre ayant à bord des cas de peste, de cholera, de la fièvre jaune, de typhus exanthématique ou de la variole ou en ayant eu depuis sept jours, ainsi que les bâtiments ayant quitté un port contaminé depuis moins de cinq fois 24 heures, devront passer les Détroits en quarantaine et appliquer par les moyens du bord les mesures prophylactiques nécessaires pour éviter toute possibilité de contamination des Détroits.

SECTION 3.- Aéronefs Civils et Militaires.

ARTICLE 11.- Les aéronefs civils et militaires ne peuvent pas survoler les Détroits leur passage entre la Méditerranée et la Mer Noire sera assuré conformément à la réglementation de la navigation aérienne en Turquie et par une route qui leur sera indiquée.

SECTION 4.

ARTICLE 12.- Les dispositions de la présente convention ne peuvent être étendues et interprêtées de manière à porter atteinte à la souveraineté de la Turquie sur les zones visées par cette convention.

SECTION 5.

ARTICLE 13. La présente convention qui abroge et remplace les dispositions de la convention concernant le régime des Détroits signée à Lausanne le 24 juillet 1923, sera ratifiée et les ratifications seront déposées aux archives de la République Française à Paris, aussitôt que faire se pourra.

Elle entrera en vigueur à la date de sa signature.

Elle aura une durée de 15 ans.

La Turquie et chacune des autres puissances contractantes, avec le consentement de celles-là, auront la faculté de proposer, en donnant un préavis de trois mois

mois aux parties contractantes, toute modification à la présente convention qu'ils jugeront utile à l'expiration de chaque période quinquennale à compter de la date de la signature.

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Enclosure No. 2 to Despatch No. 58

of June 24, 1936, from the Embassy at Istanbul.

TRANSLATION

SOURCE: LA REPUBLIQUE,
of June 23, 1936,
No. 4027.

TEXT OF THE STRAITS CONVENTION

as proposed by Turkey at the Montreux Conference
June 22, 1936.

Bulgaria, the British Empire, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Rumania, Turkey, the U.S.S.R., and Yugoslavia,

animated with the desire of regulating the passage and navigation in the Straits of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus, hereinafter referred to as the "Straits", in a manner to safeguard the interests of international commerce within the limits of Turkey's security, have decided to replace by a new convention the one concluded at Lausanne on July 24, 1923, which they recognize and declare abrogated, and have designated to this end their respective plenipotentiaries, namely:

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.....

who, after having exhibited their full powers, which were found to be in good and due form, agreed on the following provisions:

ARTICLE 1.- The passage and navigation of trading vessels and of warships in the Straits are henceforth governed by the provisions of the present convention.

SECTION 1.- TRADING VESSELS, INCLUDING HOSPITAL SHIPS, YACHTS, AND FISHING VESSELS.

ARTICLE 2.- In time of peace trading vessels, including hospital ships, yachts, and fishing vessels, will enjoy complete freedom of navigation and of passage, day and night, whatever may be their flag and cargo, without any formality, tax or charge whatsoever, excepting for such services as sanitary, piloting, lighthouse, towage

or

or others.

In order to facilitate the collection of the fees connected with the above indicated services, trading vessels passing through the Straits shall signal to the posts indicated by the Turkish Government, their name nationality, tonnage and destination.

ARTICLE 3.- In time of war, Turkey remaining neutral, trading vessels, including hospital ships, yachts, and fishing vessels mentioned in the preceding article, shall enjoy, under the same conditions, freedom of passage through the Straits.

It is, however, understood that this liberty of passage is subject to committments arising under the Covenant and incumbent upon Turkey as a member of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 4.- In time of war, Turkey being a belligerent, freedom of passage will be granted to neutral trading vessels on condition that these vessels in no way assist the enemy.

The passage of the Straits must take place during the day and along the route which, upon request, will be indicated by Turkey.

ARTICLE 5.- Trading vessels, including hospital ships, yachts, and fishing vessels, before entering the Straits, shall be subject to sanitary control in accordance with the Turkish provisions relative thereto, and within the limits of international sanitary provisions.

However, this control must be exercised at all hours of the day and in a manner to exclude any delay in the navigation of said vessels.

SECTION 2.- WARSHIPS AND NAVAL AUXILIARY SHIPS.

ARTICLE 6.- In time of peace, warships and naval auxiliary ships, with the exception of submarines, shall enjoy freedom of passage during the day, it being understood that such freedom of passage is reserved solely to cases of courtesy visits to be made by the above indicated foreign warships regardless of the flag they are flying, without any tax or charge whatsoever, and on the following conditions:

(a) for the passage of warships and naval auxiliary ships Turkey must be given notice through diplomatic channels a month beforehand indicating the destination, names, type and number

ber of the warships. During the passage through the Straits of the units indicated in the notice, the commander, without having to stop, shall communicate to a signalling post at the entrance to the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus the exact complement of vessels under his command as well as additional information relative thereto.

(b) Under the conditions of the present convention any State not bordering on the Black Sea may have pass through the Straits warships not exceeding a naval unit consisting of one cruiser and two destroyers whose total tonnage does not exceed 14 thousand tons. This tonnage of 14,000 tons likewise represents the maximum tonnage allowed for foreign warships entering the zone of the Straits.

However, should the Turkish navy happen to be away from its base in the Marmara, or in case one of her battleships of over 10,000 tons has been temporarily withdrawn from active service, the above indicated foreign complement may only pass through the Straits in two sections. In the latter case should one of the ships of the complement be of a tonnage exceeding half of the total tonnage of the complement, the vessel will have to effect the passage alone.

(c) In the Black Sea the total tonnage of warships owned by powers not bordering on that sea shall not exceed 28,000 tons.

(d) The naval complement provided for in paragraph (b) may be of a different composition on the condition that the maximum tonnage stipulated for the passage through the Straits and for entering the Black Sea undergoes no modification from that fact.

(e) Warships belonging to powers not bordering on the Black Sea which have passed through the Straits to enter that sea will be obliged to leave that sea within a maximum period of 15 days.

(f) Warships passing through the Straits may in no case use their aircraft which they may carry on board.

(g) In no case may warships in transit through the Straits, except in case of damage or perils of the sea, stay over the time which they need for their passage.

The provisioning and repairing of warships are

are governed by the provisions of Convention 13 of The Hague, 1907, dealing with maritime neutrality.

(h) The provisions contained in paragraphs a, b, d, f, g, of the present article likewise apply to warships belonging to powers bordering on the Black Sea proceeding to the Mediteranean.

However, the total number of warships thus sent into the Mediterranean may return to the Black Sea by complying with the regulations for the passage as regards the limitation of tonnage provided for in paragraph (b) and the signals mentioned in the second half of paragraph (a).

It is understood that if one of the Powers bordering on the Black Sea requests to have pass through the Straits a warship of its actual navy the tonnage of which exceeds the maximum allowed for the passage and not exceeding 25,000 tons, the passage will be subject to the following conditions: previous authorization must be obtained from Turkey and the ship must effect the passage alone.

ARTICLE 7.- In time of war, Turkey being neutral, warships and naval auxiliary vessels shall enjoy freedom of passage through the Straits in accordance with the conditions provided for in the preceding article.

Warships of belligerents are forbidden to make captures, exercise the right of search, or engage in any hostile action whatsoever within the Straits.

It is, however, understood that the liberty of passage mentioned in the first paragraph of the present article is subject to committments arising under the Covenant and incumbent upon Turkey as a member of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 8.- In time of war, Turkey being a belligerent, the passage of warships and of naval auxiliary vessels is subject to a special authorization of Turkey regardless of the provisions of article 6.

ARTICLE 9.- In case Turkey should consider herself to be under a threat of war, she shall have the right to apply the conditions of article 8 of the present convention by notifying the League of Nations of all actions which may be deemed necessary and by informing the signatories of the present convention.

ARTICLE 10.-

ARTICLE 10.- Warships having on board cases of plague, cholera, yellow fever, exanthematic typhus or smallpox or having had them within seven days, as well as warships having left a contaminated port within less than five full days of 24 hours, must pass the Straits in quarantine and use all necessary prophylactic measures on board to avoid all possibility of contamination of the Straits.

SECTION 3.- CIVIL AND MILITARY AIRPLANES.

ARTICLE 11.- Civil and military airplanes may not fly over the Straits. Their passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea will be assured in accordance with the regulations of air navigation in Turkey and by a route which will be indicated to them.

SECTION 4.

ARTICLE 12.- The provisions of the present convention cannot be extended or interpreted in a manner to prejudice Turkey's sovereignty over the zones covered by this convention.

SECTION 5.

ARTICLE 13.- The present convention, which abrogates and replaces the provisions of the convention concerning the regime of the Straits signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923, will be ratified and the ratifications deposited in the archives of the French Republic, at Paris, as soon as possible.

It will become effective on the date of its signature.

It shall have a duration of 15 years.

Turkey and each of the other contracting powers with the consent of the latter shall have the right by giving a previous notice of three months to the Contracting Parties, to propose any modification of the present convention which they may consider appropriate at the expiration of each five-year period beginning with the date of the signature.

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July 11 1936

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/937

767.68119/937

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his information a copy of despatch No. 58, dated June 24, 1936, from the American Embassy at Istanbul, Turkey, regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Istanbul,
No. 58, June 24, 1936.

NE RAH/LS

JUL 11 1936

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DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

SECRETARY OF STATE
JUL 18 1936
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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JUL 21 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

July 17, 1936.

Mr. Secretary:

Judge Moore:

The attached memorandum is a brief summary of the Straits Convention as proposed by the Turkish delegation at Montreux. I am also attaching a copy of a despatch from the Embassy at Istanbul. In this despatch the Counselor reports that he understands the British have stiffened their attitude in favor of freedom of passage of the Straits by war vessels, but that they would be prepared to concede that previous notice should be given the Turks. The Counselor also reports that the British are effectively concentrating their attention upon the Eastern Mediterranean and a possible threat from the Italians in the Dodecanese Islands and that consequently the Straits problem is of less importance to the British than one might suppose. The Turkish view regarding the passage of war vessels is that they should be limited in terms of a ratio with the Turkish naval strength. The Russians, on the other hand, are said to have in mind formulating rather complex demands on this subject at Montreux with a view to protecting themselves in the Black Sea.

It is stated that relations between Turkey and Great Britain are characterized by complete mutual confidence,

but

FW 767.68119/937

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but that both countries are disturbed over the problem of the Eastern Mediterranean of which the Straits question is only a part. For years Turkey has been concerned over the presence of the Italians in the Dodecanese Islands and there are signs that the British are developing similar sentiments.

The Counselor states that he believes that the Turks would be fully prepared to enter a Mediterranean Pact and that they are of the opinion that the League can be reformed effectively only by more precise definition of the duties and obligations of the countries in a particular region.

Wallace Murray

PHA/LS

NE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

July 16, 1936

The Embassy at Istanbul has forwarded a copy of the text of the Straits Convention as proposed by the Turks at the Montreux Conference on June 22. Briefly summarized the proposals of the Turks were as follows:

Commercial Vessels

In time of peace commercial vessels of all countries would enjoy complete freedom of navigation of the Straits. In time of war, Turkey remaining neutral, the same freedom of navigation would be enjoyed except for such restraints as Turkey might be obliged to impose as a member of the League of Nations. In time of war, Turkey being a belligerent, neutral vessels would be accorded free navigation of the Straits on condition of not aiding the enemy.

War Vessels

In time of peace war vessels, except submarines, of non-Black Sea powers, regardless of the flag they are flying, could render courtesy visits in the Black Sea provided:

1) That a naval unit making such a visit should not consist of more than one cruiser and two destroyers having a maximum

total

total tonnage of 14,000.

2) That the total tonnage of vessels of non-riparian states in the Black Sea should not exceed 28,000 at any one time.

3) That visits should be limited to 15 days..

Vessels of Black Sea powers could pass from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean and return upon compliance with the stipulations as to unit-tonnage and type of vessel prescribed for non-riparian states. No limitation is stipulated, however, with reference to total tonnage. Special permission could be given, moreover, for the passage of vessels of riparian states having a tonnage of up to 25,000 tons.

In time of war, Turkey remaining neutral, war vessels, whether belligerents or not, could navigate the Straits under the same conditions as stipulated in time of peace on condition of not committing any hostile act while in the Straits. Such treatment would be subject, however, to Turkish commitments as a member of the League.

In time of war, Turkey being a belligerent, the passage of war vessels would be subject to special authorization.

In case Turkey should consider herself menaced, the passage of war vessels could also be made subject to special authorization upon notification to the League of Nations and the signatories

of

of the Convention.

Civil and Military Airplanes

Civil and military airplanes would be prohibited from flying over the Straits but could be permitted to fly over such other route as might be prescribed.

RAH/GC

767.68119/937

NO. 1747 Political.

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Geneva, Switzerland. June 27, 1936.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
LEAGUE OF NATIONS SECTION
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SUBJECT: Régime of the Straits - Transmission of Documents.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

767.68119

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose two copies of a bulletin entitled "Documents Relating to the Dardanelles" just issued by the Geneva Research Center, which the Department may find of use as providing a concise grouping of the principal instruments relating to the régime of the Straits. I am transmitting one copy of this bulletin to the Embassy at Istanbul.

Respectfully yours,

Prentiss B. Gilbert,
American Consul.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C

Enclosure:
Two copies of bulletin, "Documents Relating to the Dardanelles."

Original and four copies to the Department of State.
One copy to American Legation, Bern.
One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul, with one copy of enclosure.

EPL/DH

767.68119/938
FILED
JUL 23 1936

MONTREUX CONFERENCE

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE DARDANELLES

Contents

1. General Treaty of Peace between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia and Turkey. Paris, 1856.

2. Convention between Russia and Turkey, limiting their Naval Force in the Black Sea. Paris, 1856.

3. Convention between Russia and Turkey, relative to the Black Sea. London, 1871.

4. Treaty of Peace, Lausanne 1923.

5. Convention relating to the Regime of the Straits. Lausanne, 1923.

6. Turkish Declaration to the League of Nations Council, April 17, 1935.

7. Turkish Note of April 10, 1936.

8. British Reply to the Turkish Note. 1936.

9. Naval Forces of the U.S.S.R. in the Black Sea. 1926, 1931, 1935, 1936.

10. Bibliography.

June, 1936.

GENEVA RESEARCH CENTER

2, Place Châteaubriand

Geneva.

General Treaty of Peace Between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia and Turkey

Signed at Paris, 30th March, 1856

Article VII.

(The High Contracting Parties) declare the Sublime Parte admitted to participate in the advantages of the Public Law and System of Europe. Their Majesties engage each on his part, to respect the Independence and Territorial Integrity of the Ottoman Empire;

Article X.

Closing of Straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

The Convention of 13th of July, 1841... has been revised by common consent (and) is an remains annexed to the present Treaty, and shall have the same force and validity as if it formed an integral part there of. (*)

Article I.

His Majesty of Sultan, on the one part, declares that he is firmly resolved to maintain for the future the principle invariably established as the ancient rule of his Empire, and in virtue of which it has, at all times, been prohibited for the Ships of War of Foreign Powers to enter the Straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus; and that, so long as the Parte is at Peace, His Majesty will admit no Foreign Ship of War into the said Straits.

(The High Contracting Parties) engage to respect this determination of the Sultan, and to conform themselves to the principle above declared.

Article II.

The Sultan reserves to himself, as in past times, to deliver Firmans of Passage for Light Vessels under Flag of War, which shall be employed, as is usual in the service of the Missions of Foreign Powers.

(*) Convention between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia and Sardinia, on the one part, and the Sultan, on the other part, respecting the Straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus. Signed at Paris, 30th March, 1856.

Article III.

The same exception applies to the Light Vessels under Flag of War, which each of the Contracting Powers is authorized to station at the Mouths of the Danube in order to secure the execution of the Regulations relative to the liberty of that River, and the number of which is not to exceed two for each Power.

Article XI.

The Black Sea is neutralized; its Waters and its Ports, thrown open to the Mercantile Marine of every Nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the Flag of War, either of the Powers possessing its Coasts, or of any other Power, with the exceptions mentioned in Articles XIV and XIX of the present Treaty.

Article XIII.

The Black Sea being neutralized according to the terms of Article XI, the maintenance or establishment upon its Coast of Military-Maritime Arsenals becomes alike unnecessary and purposeless; in consequence, His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, and His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, engage not to establish or to maintain upon that coast any Military-Maritime Arsenal.

Article XIV.

(Inclusion of a Convention on Russian and Ottoman Naval Force in Black Sea. Abrogated by the General Treaty of March 13th, 1871).

Convention between Russia and Turkey, limiting their Naval Force in the Black Sea. Signed at Paris, 30th March, 1856.(*)

Article I.

The High Contracting Parties mutually engage not to have in the Black Sea any other Vessels of War than those of which the number, the force, and the dimensions are herein after stipulated.

Article II.

The High Contracting Powers reserve to themselves each to maintain in that Sea 6 steam-vessels of 50 metres in length at the time of flotation, of a tonnage of 800 tons at the maximum and 4 light steam or sailing vessels of a tonnage which shall not exceed 200 tons each.

Treaty between Great Britain, Austria, France, Germany (Prussia), Italy, Russia and Turkey, for the Revision of certain Stipulations of the Treaties of 30th March, 1856, relative to the Black Sea and Danube. Signed at London, 13th March, 1871.

Article I.

Articles XI, XIII and XIV of the Treaty of Paris of the 30th of March, 1856, as well as the Special Convention concluded between Russia and Sublime Parte, and annexed to the said Article XIV, are abrogated, and replaced by the following Article.

Article II.

The principle of the closing of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, such as it has been established by the separate Convention of the 30th March, 1856, is maintained, with power to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to open the said Straits in time of Peace to the Vessels of War of friendly and Allied Powers, in case the Sublime Parte should judge it necessary in order to secure the execution of the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris of the 30th March, 1856.

Article III.

The Black Sea remains open, as heretofore, to the Mercantile Marine of all Nations.

(*) abrogated by the General Treaty of 13th March, 1871.

Convention between Russia and Turkey, relative to the Black Sea. Signed at London, 13th March, 1871.

Article I.

The Special Convention concluded at Paris between His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias and His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, on the 18/30th March, in the year 1856, relative to the number and force of the Vessels of War of the two High Contracting Parties, in the Black Sea, is and remains abrogated.

A series of memorandum in 1877 during Russo-Turkish war outlined British and Russian interests in the Straits, and the necessity, for Russia, of prohibiting belligerent vessels from entering the Black Sea in war time. British interests (described in a note from the Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff, 6th May 1877) lay equally in maintaining the neutrality of the Straits.

British interests prohibited any separate treaties between Turkey and Russia. Great Britain pointed out in a Memorandum to Prince Gortchakow, 15th January, 1878 that any such treaty would affect the Treaties of 1856, European treaties.

Preliminary Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey signed at San Stefano, 19th February - 3rd March, 1878.

Article XXIV.

The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles shall remain open in time of war as in time of peace to the merchant vessels of neutral States arriving from or bound to Russian ports. The Sublime Parte consequently engages never henceforth to establish at the ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azor, a fictious blockade, at variance with the spirit of the Declaration signed at Paris on the 4/16th of April, 1856.

Treaty between Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Turkey, for the Settlement of the Affairs of the East. Signed at Berlin, 13th July, 1878. (*)

Article LXIII.

Treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, as well as the Treaty of London of March 13, 1871, are maintained in all such of their provisions as are not abrogated or modified by the preceding stipulations.

(*) See cf. pp. declarations.

TREATY OF PEACE, signed at LAUSANNE
July 24, 1923

French official text communicated by the French Delegation at the Fifth Assembly of the League of Nations. The registration of this Treaty took place September 5, 1924.

The British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Roumania and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State,

on the one part,

and Turkey,

on the other part;

Part I.

2. Special Provisions

Article 23.

The High Contracting Parties are agreed to recognise and declare the principle of freedom of transit and of navigation, by sea and by air, in time of peace as in time of war, in the strait of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus, as prescribed in the separate Convention signed this day, regarding the regime of the Straits. This Convention will have the same force and effect in so far as the present High Contracting Parties are concerned as if it formed part of the present Treaty.

Article 44.

...

Turkey agrees that any Member of the Council of the League of Nations shall have the right to bring to the attention of the Council any infraction or danger of infraction of any of these obligations, and that the Council may thereupon take such action and give such directions as it may deem proper and effective in the circumstances.

Turkey further agrees that any difference of opinion as to questions of law or of fact arising out of these Articles between the Turkish Government and any one of the other Signatory Powers or any other Power, a member of the Council of the League of Nations, shall be held to be a dispute of an international character under Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Turkish Government hereby consents that any such dispute shall, if the other party thereto demands, be referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The decision of the Permanent Court shall be final and shall have the same force and effect as an award under Article 13 of the Covenant.

CONVENTION RELATING TO THE REGIME OF THE STRAITS,

signed at Lausanne, July 24, 1923

Official French text communicated by the French Delegation at the Fifth Assembly of the League of Nations and by the Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires at Berne. The registration of this Convention took place September 5, 1924.

The British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Bulgaria, Greece, Roumania, Russia, the Serb-Croat-Slovene State ant Turkey, being desirous of ensuring in the Straits freedom of transit and navigation between the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea for all nations, in accordance with the principle laid down in Article 23 of the Treaty of Peace signed this day, ...

Article I.

The High Contracting Parties agree to recognise and declare the principle of freedom of transit and of navigation by sea and by air in the Strait of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus, hereinafter comprised under the general term of the "Straits".

Article 2.

The transit and navigation of commercial vessels and aircraft, and of war vessels and aircraft in the Straits in time of peace and in time of war shall henceforth be regulated by the provisions of the attached Annex.

ANNEX

Rules for the Passage of Commercial Vessels and Aircraft, and of War Vessels and Aircraft through the Straits.

1.

Merchant Vessels, including Hospital Ships, Yachts and Fishing Vessels and non-Military Aircraft.

(a) In Time of Peace

Complete freedom of navigation and passage by day and by night under any flag and with any kind of cargo, without any

formalities, or tax, or charge whatever (subject, however, to international sanitary provisions) unless for services directly rendered, such as pilotage, light, towage or other similar charges, and without prejudice to the rights exercised in this respect by the services and undertakings now operating under concessions granted by the Turkish Government.

To facilitate the collection of these dues, merchant vessels passing the Straits will communicate to stations appointed by the Turkish Government their name, nationality, tonnage and destination.

Pilotage remains optional.

(b) In Time of War, Turkey being Neutral.

Complete freedom of navigation and passage by day and by night under the same conditions as above. The duties and rights of Turkey as a neutral Power cannot authorise her to take any measures liable to interfere with navigation through the Straits, the waters of which, and the air above which, must remain entirely free in time of war, Turkey being neutral just as in time of peace.

Pilotage remains optional.

(c) In Time of War, Turkey being a Belligerent.

Freedom of navigation for neutral vessels and neutral non-military aircraft, if the vessel or aircraft in question does not assist the enemy, particularly by carrying contraband, troops or enemy nationals. Turkey will have the right to visit and search such vessels and aircraft, and for this purpose aircraft are to alight on the ground or on the sea in such areas as are specified and prepared for this purpose by Turkey. The rights of Turkey to apply to enemy vessels the measures allowed by international law are not affected.

Turkey will have full power to take such measures as she may consider necessary to prevent enemy vessels from using the Straits. These measures, however, are not to be of such a nature as to prevent the free passage of neutral vessels, and Turkey agrees to provide such vessels with either the necessary instructions or pilots for the above purpose.

Warships, including Fleet Auxiliaries, Troopships, Aircraft Carriers and Military Aircraft.

(a) In Time of Peace.

Complete freedom of passage by day and by night under any flag, without any formalities, or tax, or charge whatever, but subject to the following restrictions as to the total force : -

The maximum force which any one Power may send through the Straits into the Black Sea is not to be greater than that of the most powerful fleet of the littoral Powers of the Black Sea existing in that sea at the time of passage; but with the proviso that the Powers reserve to themselves the right to send into the Black Sea, at all times and under all circumstances, a force of not more than three ships, of which no individual ship shall exceed 10,000 tons.

Turkey has no responsibility in regard to the number of war vessels which pass through the Straits.

In order to enable the above rule to be observed, the Straits Commission provided for in Article 10, will on the 1st January and the 1st July of each year, enquire of each Black Sea littoral Power the number of each of the following classes of vessel which such Power possesses in the Black Sea : Battle-ships, battle-cruisers, aircraft-carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, or other types of vessels as well as naval aircraft; distinguishing between the ships which are in active commission and the ships with reduced complements, the ships in reserve and the ships undergoing repairs or alterations.

The Straits Commission will then inform the Powers concerned that the strongest naval force in the Black Sea comprises: Battleships, battle-cruisers, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, aircraft and units of other types which may exist. The Straits Commission will also immediately inform the Powers concerned when, owing to the passage into or out of the Black Sea of any ship of the strongest Black Sea force, any alteration in that force has taken place.

The naval force that may be sent through the Straits into the Black Sea will be calculated on the number and type of the ships of war in active commission only.

(b) In Time of War, Turkey being Neutral.

Complete freedom of passage by day and by night under any flag, without any formalities, or tax, or charge whatever, under the same limitations as in paragraph 2 (a).

However, these limitations will not be applicable to any belligerent Power to the prejudice of its belligerent rights in the Black Sea.

The rights and duties of Turkey as a neutral Power cannot authorise her to take any measures liable to interfere with navigation through the Straits, the waters of which, and the air above which, must remain entirely free in time of war, Turkey being neutral, just as in time of peace.

Warships and military aircraft of belligerents will be forbidden to make any capture, to exercise the right of visit and search, or to carry out any other hostile act in the Straits.

As regards revictualling and carrying out repairs, war vessels will be subject to the terms of the Thirteenth Hague Convention of 1907, dealing with maritime neutrality.

Military aircraft will receive in the Straits similar treatment to that accorded under the Thirteenth Hague Convention of 1907 to warships, pending the conclusion of an international Convention establishing the rules of neutrality for aircraft.

(c) In Time of War, Turkey being Belligerent.

Complete freedom of passage for neutral warships, without any formalities, or tax, or charge whatever, but under the same limitations as in paragraph 2 (a).

The measures taken by Turkey to prevent enemy ships and aircraft from using the Straits are not to be of such a nature as to prevent the free passage of neutral ships and aircraft, and Turkey agrees to provide the said ships and aircraft with either the necessary instructions or pilots for the above purpose.

Neutral military aircraft will make the passage of the Straits at their own risk and peril, and will submit to investigation as to their character. For this purpose aircraft are to alight on the ground or on the sea in such areas as are specified and prepared for this purpose by Turkey.

(a) The passage of the Straits by submarines of Powers at peace with Turkey must be made on the surface.

(b) The officer in command of a foreign naval force, whether coming from the Mediterranean or the Black Sea, will communicate, without being compelled to stop, to a signal station at the entrance to the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus, the number and the names of vessels under his orders which are entering the Straits.

These signal stations shall be notified from time to time by Turkey; until such signal stations are notified, the freedom of passage for foreign war vessels in the Straits shall not thereby be prejudiced, nor shall their entry into the Straits be for this reason delayed.

(c) The right of military and non-military aircraft to fly over the Straits, under the conditions laid down in the present rules, necessitates for aircraft -

1) Freedom to fly over a strip of territory of five kilometres wide on each side of the narrow parts of the Straits;

2) Liberty in the event of a forced landing, to alight on the coast or on the sea in the territorial waters of Turkey.

4.

Limitation of Time of Transit for Warships.

In no event shall warships in transit through the Straits, except in the event of damage or peril of the sea, remain therein beyond the time which is necessary for them to effect their passage including the time of anchorage during the night if necessary for safety of navigation.

5.

Stay in the Ports of the Straits and of the Black Sea.

(a) Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Annex apply to the passage of vessels, warships and aircraft through and over the Straits and do not affect the right of Turkey to make such regulations as she may consider necessary regarding the number of men-of-war and military aircraft of any one Power which may visit Turkish ports or aerodromes at one time, and the duration of their stay.

(b) Littoral Powers of the Black Sea will also have a similar right as regards their ports and aerodromes.

(c) The light-vessels which the Powers at present represented on the European Commission of the Danube maintain as stationnaires at the mouths of that river as far up as Galatz will be regarded as additional to the men-of-war referred to in paragraph 2, and may be replaced in case of need.

Article 3.

With a view to maintaining the Straits free from any obstacle to free passage and navigation, the provisions contained in Articles 4 to 9 will be applied to the waters and shores thereof as well as to the islands situated therein, or in the vicinity.

Article 4.

The zones and islands indicated below shall be demilitarised:

(1) Both shores of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus over the extent of the zones delimited below (see the attached map):

Dardanelles :

On the north-west, the Gallipoli Peninsula and the area south-east of a line traced from a point on the Gulf of Xeros 4 kilometres north-east of Bakla-Burnu, reaching the Sea of Marmora at Kumbaghi and passing south of Kavak (this village excluded);

On the south-east, the area included between the coast and a line 20 kilometres from the coast, starting from Cape Eski-Stamboul opposite Tenedos and reaching the Sea of Marmora at a point on the coast immediately north of Karabigha.

Bosphorus (without prejudice to the special provisions relating to Constantinople contained in Article 8) :

On the east, the area extending up to a line 15 kilometres from the eastern shore of the Bosphorus;

On the west, the area up to a line 15 kilometres from the western shore of the Bosphorus.

(2) All the islands in the Sea of Marmora, with the exception of the island of Emir Ali Adasi.

(3) In the Aegean Sea, the islands of Samothrace, Lemnos, Imbros, Tenedos and Rabbit Islands.

Article 6.

Subject to the provisions of Article 8 concerning Constantinople, there shall exist, in the demilitarised zones and islands, no fortifications, no permanent artillery organisation, no submarine engines of war other than submarine vessels, no military aerial organisation, and no naval base.

No armed forces shall be stationed in the demilitarised zones and islands except the police and gendarmerie forces necessary for the maintenance of order; the armament of such forces will be composed only of revolvers, swords, rifles and four Lewis guns per hundred men, and will exclude any artillery.

.....

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs Turkey will retain the right to transport her armed forces through the demilitarized zones and islands of Turkish territory, as well as through their territorial waters, where the Turkish fleet will have the right to anchor.

.....

Turkey and Greece shall have the right to organise in the said zones and islands in their respective territories any system of observation and communication, both telegraphic, telephonic and visual. Greece shall be entitled to send her fleet into the territorial waters of the demilitarised Greek islands, but may not use these waters as a base of operations against Turkey nor for any military or naval concentration for this purpose.

Article 7.

No submarine engines of war other than submarine vessels shall be installed in the waters of the Sea of Marmora.

The Turkish Government shall not install any permanent battery or torpedo tubes, capable of interfering with the passage of the Straits, in the coastal zone of the European shore of the Sea of Marmora or in the coastal zone on the Anatolian shore situated to the east of the demilitarised zone of the Bosphorus as far as Darije.

.....

Article 9.

If, in case of War, Turkey, or Greece, in pursuance of their belligerent rights, should modify in any way the provisions of demilitarisation prescribed above, they will be bound to re-establish as soon as peace in concluded the regime laid down in the present Convention.

Article 10.

There shall be constituted at Constantinople an International Commission composed in accordance with Article 12 and called the "Straits Commission".

Article 11.

The Commission will exercise its functions over the waters of the Straits.

Article 12.

The Commission shall be composed of a representative of Turkey, who shall be President, and representatives of France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Bulgaria, Greece, Roumania, Russia, and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, in so far as these Powers are signatories of the present Convention, each of these Powers being entitled to representation as from its ratification of the said Convention.

The United States of America, in the event of their acceding to the present Convention, will also be entitled to have one representative on the Commission.

.....

Article 14.

It will be the duty of the Commission to see that the provisions relating to the passage of warships and military aircraft are carried out; these provisions are laid down in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the Annex to Article 2.

Article 15.

The Straits Commission will carry out its functions under the auspices of the League of Nations, and will address to the League an annual report giving an account of its activities, and furnishing all information which may be useful in the interests of commerce and navigation; with this object in view the Commission will place itself in touch with the departments of the Turkish Government dealing with navigation through the Straits.

.....

Article 18.

The High Contracting Parties, desiring to secure that the demilitarisation of the Straits and of the contiguous zones shall not constitute an unjustifiable danger to the military security of Turkey, and that no act of war should imperil the freedom of the Straits or the safety of the demilitarised zones, agree as follows:-

Should the freedom of navigation of the Straits or the security of the demilitarised zones be imperilled by a violation of the provisions relating to freedom of passage, or by a surprise attack or some act of war or threat of war, the High Contracting Parties, and in any case France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan, acting in conjunction, will meet such violation, attack, or other act of war or threat of war, by all the means that the Council of the League of Nations may decide for this purpose.

So soon as the circumstances which may have necessitated the action provided for in the preceding paragraph shall have ended, the regime of the Straits as laid down by the terms of the present Convention shall again be strictly applied.

The present provision, which forms an integral part of those relating to the demilitarisation and to the freedom of the Straits, does not prejudice the rights and obligations of the High Contracting Parties under the Covenant of the League of Nations.

.....

TURKISH DECLARATION TO THE COUNCIL

April 17, 1935

Request of the French Government under Article 11, Paragraph 2, of the Covenant of the League of Nations in view of the Decisions of the German Government relating to Armaments.

M. Rüstü Aras (Representative of Turkey) : "As you are aware, the Treaty of Lausanne contains certain military clauses which ...constitute limitations upon the means of defence of part of our national territory... The military clauses relating to the Straits are of a discriminatory character. These military clauses have no counterpart like the Locarno Agreements... Should there be changes in the situation, fixed by the existing treaties, Turkey will be obliged to make them dependent upon consequent modifications in the military regime of the Straits... Turkey, like any other State, needs security... (and) could never allow her zeal in this direction (i.e. peace) to expose her to unequal treatment... I would make it clear, however, that subsequent changes in the military regime of the Straits cannot, in our opinion, in any way affect the regime of the freedom of the Straits."

Sir John Simon (Representative of Great Britain) : "... I must naturally make all reservations with regard to it."

Baron Aloisi (Representative of Italy) : "... The Italian Government, while once more affirming that it is prepared to consider any question affecting Turkey in a spirit of complete comprehension, cannot but make every reservation in this problem."

M. Laval (Representative of France) stated that France associated herself with the reservations of Great Britain and Italy.

M. Litvinoff (Representative of the U.S.S.R.) : "... my own country ...will put no difficulties in the way of the realization of the wishes expressed by my friend the representative of Turkey."

CONVENTION RELATING TO THE REGIME OF THE STRAITS

Signed at Lausanne July 24th, 1923

Communication from the Turkish Government

Ankara, April 10,1936 (received Geneva April 11th)

M. Avenol, Secretary-General of the League of Nations,

Geneva.

I have the honour to communicate to you below for information the text of the note addressed by the Government of the Republic to the British, Bulgarian, French, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Roumanian, Soviet and Yugoslav Governments. I beg your Excellency to be good enough to take note of it and to inform the States Members of the League of Nations.

"In 1923, when Turkey agreed at Lausanne to sign the Straits Convention prescribing freedom of transit and demilitarisation, the general situation of Europe, from the political and military point of view, presented an aspect totally different from that of to-day.

"Europe was progressing towards disarmament, and the political organisation of Europe was to be based solely on the unchanging principles of law embodied in international engagements. The land, naval and air forces were much less formidable and were showing a tendency towards decrease. At that time, Turkey signed the restrictive clauses of the Straits Convention. She had the assurance given her by Article 18, which added to the guarantee afforded by Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations an undertaking that the signatories and in any case four great Powers conjointly undertook, by all the means decided upon for that purpose, by the Council of the League, the defence of the Straits if threatened.

"Since then, the situation in the Black Sea has come to present an aspect of concord which has been reassuring in every respect. Uncertainty has gradually arisen, however, in the Mediterranean; naval conferences have shown a tendency towards rearmament, and the naval shipyards will soon launch upon the seas vessels of a power never previously attained. In the air, the curve of increase has shown a swift upward turn, and continental and insular fortifications are constantly being multiplied.

"During this complete change of conditions the only guarantee intended to guard against the total insecurity of the Straits has just disappeared in its turn, and while the Powers most closely concerned are proclaiming the existence of a threat of general conflagration, Turkey finds herself exposed at her most vulnerable point to the worst dangers without any counterpart for this disquieting insecurity.

"In response to the urgent demands addressed to her, Turkey accepted the demilitarisation of the Straits, then wholly occupied by foreign forces, after having very fully considered, in the existing conditions, the value of the minimum guarantees granted to her in order that the demilitarisation of the Straits and of the continuous zones should not constitute an unjustifiable danger to the military security of Turkey.

"To Article 18 of the Convention, which provided a guarantee of security indissolubly bound up with the body of clauses regulating the regime of the Straits, the signatories attached such importance that they solemnly affirmed that the guarantee in question formed an integral part of the clauses regarding demilitarisation and freedom of transit.

"This means that without an effective, practical and efficacious assurance, Turkey's sovereignty could not have been diminished over a portion of her territory the security of which is indispensable to that of the country as a whole.

"It is also evident that if this guarantee becomes inoperative or uncertain, the equilibrium of the whole Convention is overthrown, to the prejudice of Turkey and to that of European peace.

"Political crises have made it clear that the present machinery for collective guarantees is too slow in coming into operation and that a delayed decision is likely in most cases to cause the advantage of international action to be lost. It was for this reason that Turkey in 1923, like many other Powers at the present time, could not be content with collective guarantee which would be ensured to her by the Covenant on her becoming a member of the League of Nations; that she considered the collective guarantee of all the signatories of the Straits Convention insufficient; and that only the conjoint guarantee of the four great Powers seemed to her calculated to ensure in the conditions then existing the minimum of security indispensable for her territorial integrity.

"But, if this minimum itself is weakened or rendered problematical by political and military circumstances entirely

different from those which existed when the security was given, the Government of the Republic cannot, without being guilty of serious negligence, expose the whole country to an irreparable coup de main.

"The position of the guarantors of the security of the Straits vis-à-vis the League of Nations, the particular circumstances which render doubtful, to say the least, the effective military collaboration of these guarantors to secure the object assigned to them - these factors have upset the general economy of the Convention of 1923.

"It cannot be said to-day that the security of the Straits is still ensured by a real guarantee, and Turkey cannot be asked to remain indifferent to the possibility of a dangerous failure to act.

"Besides these considerations it should be added that the Straits Convention mentions only a state of peace and a state of war, Turkey being a neutral or a belligerent in the latter case, but does not provide for the contingency of a special or general threat of war or enable Turkey in such a case to provide for her legitimate defence.

"It is amply proved to-day, however, that the most delicate stage of danger from without is this very stage of a threat of war in which a state of war may arise unexpectedly and without any formality.

"This omission may in itself render the guarantees contemplated ineffective, whatever their value.

"From the beginning of its existence the Turkish Republic has followed a policy of peace and understanding, the carrying-out of which in every field has necessarily imposed upon her sacrifices, often heavy sacrifices.

"The Turkish Government has shown in the many circumstances which have arisen in the last decade, a spirit of conciliation, of loyalty to her engagements, and of sincere attachment to the cause of peace, which has been appreciated by all the Powers. Turkey is entitled to claim for herself the security which she always ensured to other.

"Circumstances independent of the will of the Lausanne signatories have rendered inoperative clauses which were drawn up in all good faith, and as the issue at stake is the existence of Turkey herself and the security of her whole territory, the Government of the Republic may be led to take before the nation

the responsibility incumbent upon it by adopting the measures dictated by the imperious necessity of circumstances.

"In view of the above considerations, and rightly holding that the provisions of Article 18 of the Straits Convention relating to a joint guarantee of the four great Powers have become uncertain and inoperative and that they can no longer in practice shield Turkey from an external danger to her territory, the Government of the Republic has the honour to inform the Powers which took part in the negotiations for the conclusion of the Straits Convention that it is prepared to enter into negotiations with a view to arriving in the near future at the conclusion of agreements for regulation of the régime of the Straits under the conditions of security which are indispensable for the inviolability of Turkey's territory, and, in the most liberal spirit, for the constant development of commercial navigation between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea."

Tevfik Rustu Aras, Turkish Minister
for Foreign Affairs.

C O P Y

British Reply to the Turkish Note of April 10,1936

London, 16th April, 1936.

Your Excellency,

1. On 11th April the Counsellor of the Turkish Embassy communicated to my Department an aide mémoire (No. 191/33) dated 11th April expressing the desire of the Turkish Government to enter into discussions with the interested Powers with a view to the revision, in the light of existing political and military conditions, of the Convention relating to the Régime of the Straits, signed at Lausanne on 24th July, 1923. I understand that a similar aide mémoire has been communicated not only to the other signatories of that Convention, but also to the Secretary General of the League of Nations for the purpose of communication to all Members of the League.

2. I have taken note also of the assurance which His Excellency the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has been good enough to give to His Majesty's Ambassador in Turkey that the revision which the aide mémoire is designed to obtain relates only to the military clauses of the Convention.

3. The request of the Turkish Government for the reconsideration of these clauses raises issues which require careful examination, and you will appreciate the fact that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will need to consult His Majesty's Governments in the Dominions before expressing detailed views.

4. While compelled therefore to reserve their comments for the time being on the substance of the aide mémoire of 11th April, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom nevertheless recognise that the request for discussion contained therein is one which the Turkish Government are fully entitled to make, and they regard it as a valuable proof of the fidelity of the Turkish Government to the principle that international treaties cannot be modified by unilateral action. On behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom I therefore have pleasure in assuring Your Excellency without delay that they are ready to discuss the question which has been raised at such time and in such manner as may be found most convenient to all concerned.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,
(For the Secretary of State) (Signed) G.W.RENDEL.

His Excellency
Bay Fethi Okyar, etc.etc.

NAVAL FORCES OF U.S.S.R. IN BLACK SEA

	July 1st. 1926	Jan.1st. 1931	Jan.1st. 1935	Jan.1st. 1936
Ships in active Commission				
Battleships	-	1	-	1
Cruisers	1	3	3	2
Torpedo boats	4	5	4	4
Submarines	5	5	10	17
Patrol-vessels	-	-	2	2
Minesweepers	9	4	1	2
Patrol boats	5	11	25	29
Auxiliary vessels	11	2	5	5
Training ships	1	3	1	1
Ships undergoing Repairs				
Battleships			1	-
Cruisers			-	1
Torpedo-boats			1	1
Submarines			1	
Minesweepers			1	
Patrol-boats			4	4
Ships with reduced complements				
Battleships			1	1
Cruisers			1	1
Torpedo-boats			6	1
Submarines			4	4
Military aircraft, including practice and training machines		21	100	172

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
1936 JUL 9 AM 10 30

(SC)EF70

JUL 8 1936

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 10 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

CONFIDENTIAL

Sir:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter NE 767.68119/928 of 3 July, 1936, inclosing for information paraphrases of four telegrams regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Respectfully,

Acting Secretary of the Navy

FILED
JUL 13 1936

NE 767.68119/938A

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State.

July 3 1936.

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/928

767.68119/938A

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his strictly confidential information paraphrases of four telegrams regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosures:

Paraphrase of telegram No. 244, June 23, noon, from Consul at Geneva;

Paraphrase of telegram No. 32, June 25, 6 p.m., to Embassy at Istanbul;

Paraphrase of telegram No. 26, June 26, 3 p.m., from Embassy at Istanbul;

Paraphrase of telegram No. 254, June 26, 5 p.m., from Consul at Geneva.

A true copy of the signed original.

NE RAH/LS

JUL 3 1936

Paraphrase of telegram No. 244, June 23, noon, from Consul at Geneva.

The Turkish Foreign Minister in speaking to the Polish Minister at Montreux stated that direct commercial assurances had been given by Turkey to the United States and Poland, from which it was inferred that these were the only non-conference powers to receive such assurances.

No mention of continuing the Straits commission is contained in the draft convention which Turkey submitted. In this connection the Bulgarian and Rumanian delegations are of the opinion that formalities which the Turkish Government may prescribe for the navigation of the Straits could be so discriminatory and obstructive as to negate the principle of the freedom of commercial transit and they state that it is essential that there should be some neutral body of appeal such as a Straits commission.

It appears to be the general view at Montreux that little opposition will be made to remilitarization by the Turks, that the question of commercial navigation is regarded as a problem, but that the most contentious point will be the passage of war vessels, in which connection the positions taken by the various states are based on individual strategic considerations. The adjustment of the Russian and British positions seems to present the most serious problem in this respect.

Paraphrase of telegram No. 32, June 25,
6 p.m., to the Embassy at Istanbul.

(The statement of the Polish Minister mentioned in the telegram of June 23, 1936, from the Consulate at Geneva, was quoted and the following inquiry made:)

Is it the understanding of the Embassy that in speaking of "direct commercial assurances to the United States" the Turkish Foreign Minister was referring to his statement to the Ambassador mentioned in despatch No. 22* of April 23 in the second paragraph on page 4 of enclosure No. 1? Should that be the case, your opinion is requested as to whether the Foreign Minister intended his statement as a specific assurance to this Government or as background.

* Copy furnished Navy on June 2, 1936.

Paraphrase of telegram No. 26, June 26, 3 p.m., from Embassy at Istanbul.

Reference is made to the Department's telegram of June 25.

In order to avoid loss of time in consulting the Ambassador (who was on a tour of inspection) the following personal opinions are submitted:

The statement of the Foreign Minister to me reported in despatch No. 20* of April 14, and his statement to the Ambassador on April 22 were official declarations of the policy of the Turkish Government regarding commercial navigation of the Straits and were so intended. Provision for such navigation will be at least as liberal as that provided by the Straits Convention and will apply equally to vessels of signatory and non-signatory countries. This view is borne out by the text of convention proposed by the Turks at Montreux. The Turkish Foreign Minister and officials of the Foreign Office made statements to representatives of other non-conference powers similar to those made to us. The Turks have taken great pains to make their position on this point perfectly clear to everyone from the outset.

* Copy furnished Navy Department on May 12, 1936.

Paraphrase of telegram No. 254, June 26,
5 p.m., from Consul at Geneva.

According to delegates of the various powers at the Conference, the basic positions, expressed or otherwise, of the various participating powers are as follows at this time:

Commercial Navigation:

Rumania, Great Britain and Bulgaria favor some form of international control or regulation for the purpose of safeguarding commercial shipping.

Transit of War Vessels and Remilitarization:

Russia desires free exit from and entry into the Black Sea by powers on that body of water and is opposed to extending such rights to other powers. Except for courtesy visits of small units the Black Sea should be closed to other powers except in accordance with League or regional pact decisions. Only under the last stated circumstances could ships of a non-riparian belligerent enter the Black Sea.

Rumania and Bulgaria are opposed to provisions of last sentence but favor arrangements for mutual assistance.

France's position is not clear except for the fact that it is known to support the Russian position with regard to mutual assistance.

The Italian representative at Geneva made a "personal but official" visit to Montreux and made it clear that the position of his Government was one of reservation on all

questions

questions having to do with the transit of warships and re-militarization. He cryptically summarized the Italian thesis on remilitarization as being that remilitarization of the Straits should be permitted but not refortification. He also opposed discriminatory treatment favoring the transit of warships of Black Sea powers.

Turkey desires to prohibit the transit of warships in sufficient strength at any one time to constitute a threat to Istanbul. Except for this restriction ships of riparian states would enjoy freedom of passage. Other states, however, would only be entitled to send warships for courtesy visits. Anticipating possible failure with reference to ratification of a general convention Turkey is concentrating on the right to fortify which it desires should be accorded immediately upon signature of the convention or if necessary by a separate protocol. Similarly Turkey desires to be accorded the right to close the Straits to non-riparian war vessels in the event of threat of war.

Japan maintains that if rights are granted to riparian warships with regard to egress from the Black Sea similar rights should be granted non-riparian warships as regards ingress. Japan is opposed to any mention of the League in the convention and will not commit itself to defend the Straits.

Great Britain generally favors the Japanese thesis with regard to equality of treatment of riparian and non-riparian warships but as regards most points has not made its position clear.

It

It is generally believed, according to well informed sources, that Great Britain is marking time in anticipation of Italy's entry into the Conference at which time Great Britain is expected to join up with Italy and Japan in an attempt to bottle up Russia in the Black Sea.

In so far as this question presents itself as a Balkan-Italian issue, however, it is not clear as yet how far Great Britain will go in support of Italy or whether it may not take a middle stand.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

July 14 1936.

FS

A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone.

(A)

FROM Rome

Dated July 9,1936

Rec'd 9:20 a. m.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JUL 14 1936 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JUL 15 1936 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE 1936 DIVISION OF EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

254, July 9, 10 a. m.

765.84/4747

(GRAY) My 240, June 29, 4 p. m., and my despatch 1760 of June 25th.

935

There has been no comment in the inspired press regarding Italy's failure to send a delegation to the Montreux Conference. Certain uninspired newspapers, however, make it clear that Italy will refuse to participate so long as the present Mediterranean mutual assistance accords continue. A skeptical attitude is maintained regarding the possibility of reaching an agreement without Italy and a number of correspondents believe the British Government has no desire to present Italy with a fait accompli on the matter even were this possible. The British proposal now under discussion is described in detail without comment except by a few correspondents in London who note it as a recrudescence of Anglo-Russian disagreement and say it contains sufficient "explosive material" to make an immediate accord at Montreux improbable. There is disagreement among Italian correspondents as to British intentions, some believe that

England

767.68119/939

FILED JUL 27 1936

England desires to liquidate the present Mediterranean accords, while others find she persists in an attitude of hostility in the Mediterranean. Baldwin's remarks in the Commons yesterday regarding the temporary character of the mutual assistance accords are noted in this morning's press without comment.

As to the Italian attitudetoward the Straits question itself, the only point that is made clear is one of opposition to exclusive control by Turkey over a forced route of international shipping. This is brought out in an apparently inspired article in a northern newspaper which attacks the Turkish press argument that Italy's presence in the Dodecanese necessitated the rearmament of the Straits and while expressing an entirely open mind as to Turkey's rights and reiterating Italy's friendly policy toward that country, asserts that the Turkish charge of Italian aggressiveness is wholly unjustifiable. The writer also maintains that while the Dodecanese represent a base for the protection of Italian shipping, they could not be used for offensive purposes and are indeed so exposed as to represent a handicap in Italian defense under given conditions and that therefore the Turkish argument is untenable. (END GRAY).

CONFIDENTIAL.

FS 3-No. 254, July 9, 10 a. m. from Rome

CONFIDENTIAL. Foreign Office officials confirm the statement that while the Mediterranean naval accords are in force, the Italian Government does not see its way clear to participating in the Montreux Conference. In this connection there appears to be a tendency in Italian official circles to draw a distinction in so far as these accords are concerned between the obligations assumed by France and those assumed by Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia in that France is believed to have entered into a more or less informal agreement to assist only in case of attack by Italy, whereas, the other three governments are believed to have committed themselves to some form of cooperation with England even in a case where Italy would not be the aggressor. This impression combined with the reaffirmation of the accords by Eden appears to have strengthened the Italian resolution not to join the Montreux Conference while the accords are outstanding.

RR KIRK

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.68119

767.68119/940

SEE 841.00 P.R./444 FOR #2246

FROM Great Britain (Atherton) DATED June 8,1936

TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING:

The Dardanelles Conference. Invitations issued by Turkish Government to-. Meeting to be held at Montreux.

rc

The Dardanelles Conference.

Before the League meetings the last of June that Conference on the Dardanelles will begin to which the Turkish Government has issued invitations. The British Government will be represented at this Conference. The proposal is that the meeting shall be held at Montreux, because Turkey wishes to raise her question among the signatory Powers to the Straits Convention, and not in the League, of which Japan, one of the signatories, is no longer a member. The question, as Turkey is likely to put it, is whether she shall have carte blanche to fortify the Straits on undertaking to preserve the present system for commercial purposes.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 845.00/915 FOR #69

FROM Calcutta (Groth) DATED June 11, 1936

TO NAME 1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Indian Reaction to Turkish Request for Refortification of the Dardanelles.

rc

767.68119/941

941

567.68119

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 765.84/4765 FOR Tel. #567, 6 pm

FROM France (Straus) DATED July 1, 1936

TO NAME 1—1127 GPO

REGARDING: Montreux Conference. The French point of view as concerns the passage of war vessels through the Straits is that in principle there should be equality of treatment for all states but that as practical matter the Russians have a particular problem which should be regarded with sympathy, namely, the necessity of being able to move ships freely between the Black Sea and the Baltic.

767.68119/942

ge

WE
NE

JS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (B)

PARIS

Dated July 1, 1936

Rec'd 3 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

567
~~573~~, July 1, 6 p.m.

The Foreign Office, while not yet posted on all the conversations which Blum and Delbos have had recently at Geneva, is evidently greatly pleased at the re-establishment of cooperation with the British. However, they admit that this cooperation is still a rather tenuous affair since they do not know just what the developments of British policy may be in the immediate future. As regards the fundamental questions to be dealt with in Europe (?) as concerns League reform, they believe the British will go along with them in the idea of interpreative resolutions with particular reference to Articles Eleven and Sixteen rather than to seek formal amendments requiring ratification by each government.

It is believed that the lifting of sanctions by action of the individual countries, which is expected to follow the Geneva meeting, will (?) and while leaving in abeyance the question of recognition of Italy's African conquest, will proceed to restore a large measure of cooperation with Italy.

The possibility of an Italo-German understanding no longer seems to be taken very seriously. While the

Foreign

865d.01

462.65

765.84/4765

Foreign Office believes that Hitler may, by a typically sudden decision, decide at any moment to send an interim reply to the British questionaire, they rather incline to the view that there will be considerably further delay in despatching the reply until Hitler can guage the effect on Italy of the Geneva meeting, as well as the further development of Anglo-French cooperation. It is expected that there will be a meeting before long of the Locarno powers "with or without Italy"

Locarno

Regarding the Montreux Conf erence, the French point of view as concerns the passage of war vessels through the Straits is (in confidence) that in principle there should be equality of treatment for all states but that as practical matter the Russians have a particular problem which should be regarded with sympathy, namely, the necessity of being able to move ships freely between the Black Sea and the Baltic.

767.68119

Copies by mail to London, Rome, Berlin Geneva.

STRAUS

SMS NPL

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 863.01/361 FOR Tel. 274- 4pm

FROM Geneva (Gilbert) DATED July 2,1936

TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING: Regime of the Straits. A member of the British Montreaux Delegation states that the attitude toward the Russian and Turkish demands was still definitely that of the Delegation but that its approval by London is uncertain or at least delayed.

767.68119/943

fp

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.68119/944

SEE 874.00/552 FOR #233

FROM Bulgaria (Sterling) DATED June 1, 1936
TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING:
Modification of Straits Convention.

Statement of the Foreign Minister that Bulgaria has accepted invitation to attend conference at Montreux and has given favorable reply to Turkish proposal concerning -.

Wi

Sofia, Bulgaria, June 1, 1936.

No. 233

Subject: Statements of Minister for Foreign Affairs on External and Internal questions.

767.68119

874.00/5572

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

A few days after my return to Sofia I called on Mr. Kiossé ivanoff, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to pay my respects, and in the course of the interview the conversation turned on the internal situation and certain phases of Bulgarian policy in connection with recent events abroad. I have the honor to summarize hereunder the substance of his remarks in reply to my questions or suggestions.

The internal situation has much improved from the political point of view during the last few months and was now quiet. This was due to the Government's action in stamping out the Military League and the

total

total elimination of politics in the army, any contravention of the orders given in this respect being liable to severe punishment. He hoped and believed that this condition would continue. An improved agricultural situation had also tended to quieten political questionings and discontent among the peasants. Until now the Government had been occupied with liquidating the mistakes of the past; henceforth the task of the Government would be one of creation.

The subject of a return to constitutional government was being given serious consideration. Within a month there would be a change in the cabinet, some members of which had not proved capable; after which the municipal elections would be held, and it was then planned to hold a general election to elect deputies for the legislature, probably within four to six months. It was his (Kiossévanoff's) idea that the constitution should be framed by the Government and presented to the electorate as a "fait accompli", on the basis of which the people would vote and elect their deputies as to its acceptability; in other words, a plebescite should be held to approve or disapprove the constitution as presented. The King's view, on the other hand, was that the deputies should first be elected and thereafter determine in parliament the form of constitution they themselves desire.

External Affairs. Bulgaria would abide by her contracts and would not follow the lead of Germany and Austria in taking unilateral action in breaking treaties. She would not even request a revision of the Treaty of

Neuilly

Neuilly to increase her military forces; her policy was for peace and to live on friendly terms with her neighbors; and to make such a request would create suspicion on their part and only increase the difficulties of the situation. Moreover, from the practical point of view, what could Bulgaria, with a population of six millions, do against the countries which surrounded her (the Balkan Entente) with a population of over fifty millions? She must, however, have her army, small but well-trained and equipped, ready for defense at short notice if attacked and so stave off invasion until the League of Nations could come to her aid.

Nor would Bulgaria take the occasion at the present time, in the troubled and uneasy European situation, to ask for the application of Article 48 of the Treaty of Neuilly, whereby an economic outlet to the Agean is guaranteed. Such a request would create complications with her neighbors.

As regards the re-fortification of the Dardanelles, Bulgaria in her desire to be on the best relations with Turkey (a policy which had been neglected by previous Governments) has not only accepted the Turkish invitation to attend the conference at Montreux on June 22nd, but has given a favorable reply to the proposal itself. As a matter of fact, the Straits were to Bulgaria only a question of her commercial shipping; she realized that in the event of war involving Turkey the Dardanelles would be closed, treaty or no treaty.

If possible Mr. Kiossivanoff would personally attend the conference.

Respectfully yours,

F. A. Sterling,
American Minister.

File No. 800
FAS/JRT.

A true copy of the signed original

ADDRESS REPLY TO
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
AND REFER TO INITIALS
AND No.

NE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

1936 JUL 15 AM 10 52

JUL 14 1936

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 16 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

file

CONFIDENTIAL

Sir:

I acknowledge, with appreciation, receipt of your letter NE 767.68119/929 of July 7, 1936, inclosing for strictly confidential information a paraphrase of a telegram regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Respectfully,

W. H. Standley

Acting Secretary of the Navy.

FILED
JUL 25 1937

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State.

767.68119/945

#14796

(SC)EF70

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

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1936 JUL 16 AM 10 49

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 16 1936
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

CONFIDENTIAL

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

JUL 15 1936

767.68119/946

Reg 147902

Sir:

I acknowledge, with appreciation, receipt of your letter NE 767.68119/932 of July 8, 1936, citing a telegram from the Ambassador at Istanbul, dated July 3, confirming certain declarations made by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs regarding the intentions of his government in the matter of navigation of the Dardanelles Straits by commercial vessels.

Respectfully,

Acting Secretary of the Navy.

FILED
JUN 25 1937

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State.

July 14 1936

In reply refer to
NE

767.68119/946A

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses for his strictly confidential information paraphrases of portions of three telegrams and a copy of one telegram, a portion of which is in paraphrase, regarding the Straits Conference at Montreux.

Enclosures:

Paraphrase of portion of telegram No. 331, July 1, 3 p.m., from London;

Paraphrase of portion of telegram No. 567, July 1, 6 p.m., from Paris;

Paraphrase of portion of telegram No. 274, July 1, 4 p.m., from Geneva;

Copy of telegram No. 254, July 9, 10 a.m., from Rome (latter part in paraphrase).

JUL 14 1936

NE RAH/LS

A true copy of the signed original.

Paraphrase of portion of telegram No. 331,
July 1, 3 p.m., from Embassy at London.

The British Foreign Office admitted that they had been surprised by the Russian stand at Montreux but stated that they do not regard the question of entrance into the Black Sea as particularly vital to England. The Soviets, it was intimated, were so apprehensive with regard to Germany and Japan that they were prepared to be friendly with powers of Western Europe and it seemed advisable to take such advantage of this propitious occasion as possible.

According to the French Counselor the Mediterranean pact had been discussed at Geneva and Paris but the British were not yet prepared to take a definite stand. Eden had indicated that the nature of his assurances given in the House of Commons had been purely temporary. That the British were surprised by the desire of the Soviets to play a Mediterranean role was confirmed by the French Counselor who described the British attitude toward the Soviets as "undercover friendliness". The French had been told by the British that an endeavor would be made to reach an agreement on outstanding naval questions with the Russians and that they might consult later with the French and Americans regarding the situation.

Paraphrase of portion of telegram
No. 567, July 1, 6 p.m., from
Embassy at Paris.

With reference to the Montreux Conference, the Foreign Office advises confidentially that the French point of view regarding navigation of the Straits by war vessels is that equality of treatment should be accorded all states. However, viewing the situation as a practical matter it is apparent that the Russians have a particular problem with regard to the freedom of the movement of vessels from the Black Sea to the Baltic which should be viewed sympathetically.

Paraphrase of portion of telegram
No. 274, July 1, 4 p.m., from
Consul at Geneva.

According to a member of the British delegation to the Montreux Conference the attitude of the British delegation toward the demands of Russia and Turkey remains as described in the Consulate's telegram No. 265* of June 29. Approval of this attitude by London, However, is problematical or may be delayed to say the least. Stanhope is going to London to discuss this matter.

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* Copy of this telegram was sent to Navy under cover of letter dated July 7, 1936.

Copy of telegram No. 254, July 9, 10 a.m., from Embassy at Rome, the latter portion of which is in paraphrase.

There has been no comment in the inspired press regarding Italy's failure to send a delegation to the Montreux Conference. Certain uninspired newspapers, however, make it clear that Italy will refuse to participate so long as the present Mediterranean mutual assistance accords continue. A skeptical attitude is maintained regarding the possibility of reaching an agreement without Italy and a number of correspondents believe the British Government has no desire to present Italy with a fait accompli on the matter even were this possible. The British proposal now under discussion is described in detail without comment except by a few correspondents in London who note it as a recrudescence of Anglo-Russian disagreement and say it contains sufficient "explosive material" to make an immediate accord at Montreux improbable. There is disagreement among Italian correspondents as to British intentions, some believe that England desires to liquidate the present Mediterranean accords, while others find she persists in an attitude of hostility in the Mediterranean. Baldwin's remarks in the Commons yesterday regarding the temporary character of the mutual assistance accords are noted in this morning's press without comment.

As to the Italian attitude toward the Straits question itself, the only point that is made clear is one of opposition to exclusive control by Turkey over a forced route of inter-

national

national shipping. This is brought out in an apparently inspired article in a northern newspaper which attacks the Turkish press argument that Italy's presence in the Dodecanese necessitated the rearmament of the Straits and while expressing an entirely open mind as to Turkey's rights and reiterating Italy's friendly policy toward that country, asserts that the Turkish charge of Italian aggressiveness is wholly unjustifiable. The writer also maintains that while the Dodecanese represent a base for the protection of Italian shipping, they could not be used for offensive purposes and are indeed so exposed as to represent a handicap in Italian defense under given conditions and that therefore the Turkish argument is untenable.

PARAPHRASE: Confirmation has been received from Foreign Office officials to the effect that the Italian Government does not see how it can participate in the Montreux Conference as long as the Mediterranean naval accords remain in effect. Italian officials seem to draw a distinction as regards these accords between the obligations assumed by France and those assumed by Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia inasmuch as it is believed that France only agreed somewhat informally to assist in case of an Italian attack whereas the other three are thought to have agreed to a certain cooperation with England even when Italy would not be the aggressor. It is this impression combined with Eden's reaffirmation of the accords which seems to have caused the Italians to refrain from participation in the Montreux Conference as long as the Mediterranean accords are in force.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 500.A 15 A 3/1796 FOR Despatch #1916

FROM Japan (Grew) DATED June 25, 1936.

TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING: The conference at Montreux to discuss the Turkish proposal to re-fortify the Dardanelles is meeting opposition so far as it concerns any implication that Japan would guarantee freedom of the Straits. Japan opposes allowing the Soviet navy Free passage.

767.68119/947

With regard to the recently convoked conference at Montreux to discuss the Turkish proposal to re-fortify

the

the Dardanelles, the Japanese representative, Mr. Naotake Sato, Ambassador to Paris, is expected to reject any project which will imply Japanese guarantee of the freedom of the Straits, according to press reports. News despatches state that Japan is not opposed to the Turkish desire to re-fortify the Dardanelles but that it does not wish to participate in agreements involving the League of Nations inasmuch as it is no longer a member. However, Ambassador Sato is quoted as saying that Japan as a signatory and guarantor of the Lausanne Treaty understands the necessity of re-examining some of the provisions of the Straits Convention and is willing to cooperate fully in that work. It is reported that while Japan may be willing to participate in a new agreement fixing the status of the Straits it desires that the agreement have little or no connection with the League of Nations. From the tenor of the first press reports Japan seemed not to be vitally interested in the Montreux Conference, but later despatches indicate that the Conference has now reached a critical stage. Japan apparently has flatly refused to agree to any proposal allowing the Soviet Navy free passage through the Straits, while the Soviet Union insists that it must have that privilege. Local observers now seem to be pessimistic regarding the success of the Conference as it is reported that Great Britain will side with the Japanese against the USSR. There is perhaps a certain amount of wishfulness expressed in

these

these reports. The Japanese wish to keep the power of the Russians to build war vessels at as low a point as possible, and hope that the British are willing to support them so far as concerns the closing of the Straits to man-of-war. This would effectively eliminate the use of the Black Sea ports for the construction of Russian ships of war, a measure which in times past has had British approval.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph C. Grew

500.
MMHig:c

Copy to Embassy, London
" " " Moscow

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 2932 Berlin, July 8, 1936.

Subject: German Apprehensions regarding the Montreux Straits Conference.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 10 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Good! (JDB)

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 31 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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AUG 4 1936

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A-C/C
AUG 4 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 16 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

767.68119/948

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
AUG 1 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

767.68119

FILED
AUG 15 1936

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose a translation of an article in the DEUTSCHE DIPLOMATISCH-POLITISCHE KORRESPONDENZ of June 30 entitled "Questionable 'Ways Out' " which appears to have given rise to reports in the British press and elsewhere that Germany might make use of a change of status of the Dardanelles Straits to demand a higher naval ratio than provided in the British-German agreement of last year.

The

The article deals with differences in the British and Russian positions at the Montreux Conference and mentions press reports to the effect that a "way out" was being considered whereby Great Britain would consent to the Russian fleet's being accorded free passage through the Straits on the condition that it would use the Mediterranean merely as a "thoroughfare" to other maritime spheres of interest, in particular the Baltic. The article declares that such an arrangement would necessarily be made at the cost of a "complete outsider" and concludes with the somewhat ominous phrase: "On the other hand, there should be no room for doubt that Germany is following tendencies that amount to a diversion maneuver at her expense with the necessary suspicion and in case of need might see herself forced to take such a "way out" and all its possible effects - not only its moral effect - duly into account."

There is enclosed also a brief report appearing in the London TIMES of July 2 which points out that Russia already possesses freedom of passage through the Straits. It fails to make mention, however, of a possible discussion between Great Britain and Russia of arrangements in the Baltic. The idea that such arrangements have been discussed nevertheless persists in German minds and the "rumors"

741.61

that

that Germany may be studying the London naval agreement in this light are perhaps not as "irresponsible" as the TIMES would wish to make it appear, particularly in view of the semi-official character of the DEUTSCHE DIPLOMATISCH-POLITISCHE KORRESPONDENZ which has conveyed an unmistakable hint of German concern.

It is not expected here, however, that Germany will take steps in the near future to press for a change in the London naval agreement. In responsible foreign circles the true significance given the position adopted by the D.D.-P.K. is that Germany at some later date may not be above offering the strength and status of the Russian fleet as the basis of a claim to increased naval power, just as it has made it plain that it is not prepared to consider a limitation of air strengths in Europe without account being taken of the Russian air force.

500 A15 a 5

Respectfully yours,

Ferdinand Lathrop Mayer,
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim.

Enclosures:
1. Translation of article in DEUTSCHE DIPLOMATISCH-POLITISCHE KORRESPONDENZ.
2. Article in London TIMES.

800

Copy to American Embassy, London.
JDB:EM

1 cc to A-M

Translation
from
DEUTSCHE DIPLOMATISCH-POLITISCHE KORRESPONDENZ
July 6, 1936.

Questionable "Ways Out".

Not without self-satisfaction was the Conference of Montreux and the subject to be discussed there, i. e., the refortification of the Dardanelles, put up as an example of how one's rights can quite well be achieved along the normal path of negotiations. But it was overlooked that this question was not really up for discussion at all, since, according to the draft which Turkey submitted to the Conference, the only thing to be negotiated on was the regulation of the rights of the other Powers to pass through the Straits, while the fortification and defense of the Straits by their owner - Turkey herself - was taken as a matter of course.

Though the others simply took it as a matter of course this was certainly not done for any other reason than that the various Powers deemed it desirable, for very different reasons, however, that the controlled regulation of transit - and experience has taught us that this requires a materially established Power - should be carried out by the owner of the Straits. For one thing, it was not desired that the Straits should suddenly be seized by some "unknown quantity" as a maritime base; for another, there was universal distrust among the various Powers that unless the Dardanelles were properly fortified, an undesirable shifting of the military

equilibrium might occur in the parts of the seas interested at any given time by possible movements of the navies.

The discussion that ensued in Montreux was limited exclusively to these questions and it was natural that the inclusion of future potentialities in the calculations led to conclusions capable of considerably disturbing the harmony among the negotiators. And so it soon proved that the authoritative Power on the Black Sea considered it highly undesirable that fleets - not alone the fleets of the Powers predominating in the Mediterranean - should have freedom of action. Neither did the other side make any secret of the fact that a shift in the Soviet Russian Black Sea fleet outside of its own region would be felt to be quite intolerable. Such misgivings were expressed with unmistakable distinctness not only with regard to the Mediterranean but also with regard to the Far East.

In order to escape from this situation so unpleasant for all concerned and also in order not to strain Moscow's sensitiveness too much, it appears from Geneva reports that they are playing with a "way out", the costs of which they will of course try to thrust upon a complete outsider once more, according to the old custom. England, it is stated, would agree to an unlimited right for the Russian Black Sea fleet to pass through the Straits on condition that the Soviet Russian military forces use the Mediterranean only as a transit route - with the exception of their use in a League of Nations action - and be used exclusively for operations in the Baltic

Sea

Sea and in the White Sea. In other words, what they are eager to protect themselves and their spheres of interest from, they are unscrupulously prepared to impose on others. This shows a very serious intention to seek personal advantages and once more by consciously exposing outsiders to damage and higher risks. For, even the advocates of such a "solution" cannot fail to realize that in this way the same unrest and insecurity would be carried into the Baltic Sea region which they are seeking for good reasons to escape in their own spheres of interest.

It does not seem quite comprehensible that statesmen who claim to serve "indivisible" peace could lend their hand to such an attempt deliberately to make trouble somewhere. In conformity with the principle of not interfering in non-German regions or in the spheres of interest of others, Germany has deliberately remained aloof from the Dardanelles question and has restricted herself to observing these discussions - which is only too necessary. In other words, this means that Germany, as a disinterested party, will be favorably disposed towards any settlement compatible with the laws of fairness and common sense. On the other hand, there should be no room for doubt that Germany is following tendencies that amount to a diversion maneuver at her expense with the necessary suspicion and in case of need might see herself forced to take such a "way out" and all its possible effects - not only its moral effect - duly into account.

AC ER

Enclosure No.2

London TIMES
July 2,1936.

GERMANY AND THE STRAITS

UNFOUNDED RUMOURS

FROM OUR NAVAL CORRESPONDENT

Reports have been current recently in various quarters that the German Government have been disturbed by the course of the negotiations at Montreux for modification of the Straits Convention, which governs the passage of men-of-war through the Bosporus and Dardanelles. It has been suggested that Germany regards the proposal to accord free right of passage of the Straits to Russian war vessels in the Black Sea as threatening to upset the equilibrium of naval strength; and that the German Government may make this the basis of a demand for increase in the 35 per cent. ratio accepted in the Anglo-German Naval Agreement last year.

It is difficult to believe that there can be any basis for these suggestions. Since the conclusion of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 the Russian Fleet in the Black Sea has possessed the right of free exit. No new situation therefore arises in that respect from the present proposals before the conference at Montreux. Moreover, even if it did it would provide no ground for a German demand for increase in the Anglo-German ratio; for Paragraph 2 (c) of the Anglo-German Agreement runs as follows:—

> Germany will adhere to the ratio 35 : 100 in all circumstances—*e.g.*, the ratio will not be affected by the construction of other Powers.

There is indeed an "escape clause" designed to provide against unforeseen developments in the future; for the paragraph quoted goes on:

> If the general equilibrium of naval armaments, as normally maintained in the past, should be violently upset by any abnormal and exceptional construction by other Powers, the German Government reserve the right to invite his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to examine the new situation thus created.

A new situation, if it did arise, would thus give cause for an invitation to examine it, but even then, pending such examination, there would hardly be ground for a demand for increase. The rumours mentioned may be regarded as irresponsible.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 23 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1—1336

FS

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 24 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM

GRAY

Istanbul

Dated July 22, 1936 July 23 1936

Rec'd 11:45 a. m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 22 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

To Navy 7/22/36 PHA/LS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

36, July 22, 1 p. m.

Upper Bosphorus and Dardenelles demilitarized zones and Islands of Imros and Tenedos occupied by Turkish troops yesterday.

RR

MACMURRAY

767.68119/949

FILED
JUL 24 1936

In reply refer to
NE 767.68119/949

July 23 1936

767.68119/949

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy and encloses a copy of a telegram dated July 22, 1936, from the American Ambassador at Istanbul, Turkey, regarding the occupation by Turkish troops of the former demilitarized zones in Turkey.

Enclosure:

Telegram No. 36, dated
July 22, 1936, from
Embassy at Istanbul.

NE PHALS

JUL 23 1936.

A true copy of the signed original.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ROME, July 9, 1936.

No. 1772.

Subject: Straits Conference and the Mediterranean Situation.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
AUG 4 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 19 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 31 1936
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 23 1936
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

767.68119/950

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
AUG 1 1936
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

767.68119/939

FILED
SEP 8 - 1936

With reference to my telegram No. 254 of July 9th regarding the Montreux Conference, I have the honor to inform the Department that the Italians have taken the stand -- although no public announcement to that effect has been made -- that so long as the mutual assistance accords in the Mediterranean continue they will refuse to participate in the Straits discussions, while at the same time they will not recognize any agreement concluded in their absence.

British views on the Straits question, as mentioned in my despatch No. 1760/935 of June 25th, were thought to coincide at a number of points with the Italian attitude,

and

and it was felt that sooner or later England would have to get together with Italy on Mediterranean affairs. Accordingly the alleged Anglo-Russian agreement at Geneva prior to the Assembly meeting of June 30th was greeted by most Italian writers with considerable scepticism, many of them voicing the opinion that the report of such an agreement was intended essentially to frighten the Italians, and also the Germans, into a more submissive frame of mind. Certain newspapers protested most emphatically at the alleged British effort to add Russia to the Mediterranean alliance which, despite the lifting of sanctions, England insisted should be maintained. It was pointedly mentioned that such an agreement might well bring about a concordance of views between Tokyo, Berlin, and Rome, even though the Russian argument concerning the necessity of free communications between the Odessa and Vladivostok and Kronstadt bases were found "fantastic" by certain correspondents on the ground that those bases were too far apart to bring the fleets together in times of war, not to mention the fact that the route to Siberia would be infested with Japanese submarines and the Oere Sund guarded by German submarines, so that the agreement in practice would be directed solely against Italy. There were also correspondents who attributed this development to Eden's irrepressible desire to throttle Italy in the Mediterranean at least, having failed to keep her out of Ethiopia, and one writer asserted that the Genevan atmosphere inevitably acted on Eden as the smell of gunpowder on an old warhorse. The Reuter report of June 2nd to the effect that an agreement was virtually reached and that a treaty would be signed at Montreux whether Italy liked it or not was termed by the TRIBUNA a definite indication of the British "or Edenist" desire to isolate Italy. In general, however, it was felt

unlikely

unlikely that the British could so far reconcile their differences with Russia as to reach a satisfactory treaty regarding the Straits and at the same time permanently antagonize the Italians in the Mediterranean. This theory was strengthened by subsequent developments, particularly the presentation of the British counter-proposal which is said to have heightened Anglo-Russian dissension. Furthermore, although this key is but lightly touched in the press, it is believed that the Italo-German air convention, the general atmosphere of rapprochement between Italy and Germany, and Germany's general attitude toward England recently have not been without admonitory effect on the British in indicating the possibility of future air cooperation between the two countries in the Mediterranean area and showing that a pro-Russian attitude on England's part might bring about that seemingly impossible phenomenon, an Italo-German entente.

Italian newspapers are not greatly given to forecasts on the ultimate solution of the Straits or broader Mediterranean question in view of the confusion existing in British policy. At one time England was seen to prefer a Four-Power Pact, then a Five-Power Pact including Russia, from whom France refused to be separated. Then, in view of the impossibility of reconciling Russia and Germany, it was felt that England was leaning toward a Triple Alliance. Today there is speculation on the possibility (which many Italians had long maintained would materialize) of England's coming to terms with Germany and Italy direct.

On the whole, it may be said that the majority opinion voiced in the press has consistently been disbelief of any British determination to confront Italy with a <u>fait accompli</u>

at

at Montreux, in view of the serious future consequences of such a step. Nevertheless the British are incessantly criticized in the news columns of certain newspapers for their refusal to make any gesture of pacification in the Mediterranean, their insistence on continuing the mutual assistance agreements, their encouraging of submarine construction by Greece, their announcement of the closing of a part of the port of Alexandria for three months for mine-laying and mine-sweeping maneuvers, their despatch of another large battleship to Alexandria, and their endeavor to make Alexandria a permanent British base under the treaty now being negotiated with Egypt. A few correspondents still cling to their view that the British government desires to liquidate the present Mediterranean accords but is hampered by considerations of prestige.

Baldwin's remarks regarding these accords in the House of Commons yesterday are noted editorially, though without elation, in tonight's press. The reaction, as the government spokesman expresses it in the GIORNALE D'ITALIA, is that Italy takes note of the Prime Minister's statement but awaits action. If it is true the Mediterranean accords refer solely to the possibility of an Italian attack as a result of sanctions, that such a possibility has always been considered unlikely, and that British counter-guarantees to the other signatories are purely temporary, Gayda remarks that the accords should be considered automatically expiring with the lifting of sanctions. Italy , he adds, has patiently endured, but will always refuse to accept, arrangements characterized by a hostility which no act of Italy has justified, by violation of letter and spirit of Italy's former treaties with France, Greece, and Turkey,by incompatibility with Italo-British cooperation in the Mediterranean, and by a shifting of the political and naval balance of power

to

to Italy's detriment. Gayda refrains from the ironic comment of certain other writers, who fail to see how a responsible government could effect a naval concentration and conclude a naval coalition which risked plunging Europe into war merely because of a contingency considered not only "hypothetical" but "improbable". The TRIBUNA remarks that Baldwin is given to such bland definitions and refers to the term "symbolic" used in describing Germany's occupation of the Rhineland. In any case it is recommended that this "temporary" policy be immediately superseded by a permanent and stable one to which Italy can lend her invaluable cooperation.

The Italian papers have not yet picked up the report received late this afternoon that the British government this morning decided to withdraw its reinforcements from the Mediterranean and perhaps also to liquidate the mutual assistance accords.

As to Italian views of the questions involved in the revision of the Straits regime, the only clearly stated point is opposition to exclusive Turkish control over this international shipping route. Care is consistently taken to express no general criticism of Turkey's demands, sympathy for her rights being in fact freely expressed -- though without mentioning just what those rights are. An apparently inspired article in the Turin GAZZETTA DEL POPOLO on July 7th, however, definitely though courteously attacked the argument that Italy's possession of the Dodecannese and Leros necessitated the rearmament of the Straits. The writer pointed out that Italy, entirely closed within the Mediterranean, was fully entitled to guarantee her self-defense and protect her vital lines of communication. Her position in fact, he continued, had been recognized as tragic, with other powers

powers controlling the entrances at Gibraltar, Suez, and the Dardanelles. Her occupation of Libya and the Dodecannese had but partially restored an unfavorable balance of power, and it was absurd to view Italian possession of those islands as a menace when the preponderant position of England, for example, was not so regarded.

The writer vigorously denied that the Dodecannese represented a threat to Turkish territorial integrity; they were situated far from the peninsula and in certain contingencies would, indeed, prove a handicap in the defense of Italian possessions. They did, however, afford protection for Italian shipping from the Black and Red Seas: this was their essential function and one presupposing friendly relations with Turkey, since obviously if the Straits were closed Italy's vital communications would be cut off. Furthermore, the writer asserted, the islands were so close to the Turkish mainland as to be in grave danger from the latter in case of war, while on the other hand their general configuration would make it impossible to use them as a base of offensive operations in Turkish territory. That Italy would ever desire to invade Turkey, he said, certainly found no justification in her past policy of friendliness toward that country and her efforts to reconcile Turkey and Greece; nevertheless the prejudiced attitude toward her had not only persisted but had been strengthened through the Balkan Entente and through the false Turkish pretext that Italy was in general and by nature an "aggressive" power. The writer gave assurance that his remarks were in no way dictated by an anti-Turkish spirit but by the conviction that there could no longer exist vassal states and predominant states and that "international legislation should work to smooth all rought angles from which friction

capable

capable of generating widespread conflicts may develop." He concluded that:

> "The Italian Islands of the Aegean have defensive and not offensive capacities, perform a function of balance in the Mediterranean, represent a supporting base for Italian trade in the Levant, and facilitate Italy's communications with the peoples of the East.
>
> "Italy's presence at Rhodes therefore does not justify the Turkish demand for the rearmament of the Straits and thus for resumption of exclusive control over a forced passage of international trade."

Respectfully yours,

A. Kirk.

Alexander Kirk,
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim.

eh
820.

Central File: Decimal File 767.68119, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Political., War. Peace. Friendship. Alliance. Non-Aggression., Turkey And Greece, Termination Of War. Mediation. Armistice., Jan. 2, 1930 - July 23, 1936. January 2, 1930 - July 23, 1936. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1930-1939. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111385556%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 20 June 2025.